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S. Africa judge sentences 6 whites to die

JOHANNESBURG (R) — A South African white judge sentenced six white rightists to death on Wednesday for murdering four black men at an illegal roadblock near Johannesburg. The six members of the neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB) were condemned to hang in a supreme court ruling that came as South Africa entered the first full day of a new, black-led democratic era. The AWB is a paramilitary white supremacist group led by firebrand Eugene Terreblanche that wants a Europeans-only homeland. The men were found guilty of four counts of murder each. In addition to the death penalty — executions are now in abeyance in South Africa — one received a 15-year jail term and the other five men got 18 years jail for attempted murder, assault and possession of unlicensed firearms. Judge Dirk Marais, passing judgment, said the sentences should act as a deterrent for those intent on taking the law into their own hands. Those sentenced to death were Petrus Matthews, Marinus van der Schyff, Frederick Badenhorst, Marius Visser, Karel Meiring and Andre Visser.

Price: Jordan 150 fils

Scuds kill 25 in Sanaa; mediation bids intensified

Combined agency dispatches

AT LEAST two Scud missiles slammed into the centre of Sanaa Wednesday killing at least 25 civilians as southern forces went on the offensive against rival northern troops in war-torn Yemen.

The Scuds, fired by southern forces as dawn broke over the northern capital and again in the afternoon, flattened houses and badly damaged surrounding buildings in the worst attacks on the city since the civil war erupted last week.

The victims included an entire family, officials said.

President Ali Abdulla Saleh, whose forces have been fighting those of his southern rival Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh, vowed that "this cowardly act will not go unpunished."

He told military commanders the Scud had killed or wounded 53 people, the official news agency SABA reported. Earlier it said that at least 25 were killed.

Southern forces have fired 19 Scud missiles at northern Yemen since fighting began, including 13 at the capital, according to the Sanaa authorities.

Southerners also launched a missile and artillery bombard-

ment of Al Rahda, near the town of Taiz, 300 kilometres south of here, a northern spokesman said.

Meanwhile, southern jets and artillery pounded northern forces based some 60 kilometres east of the strategic southern port city of Aden.

The heaviest fire was concentrated on the Zinjibar area, as well as Jiar and Bakis, where the northern Al Amaliq Brigade is based.

Some 12,000 northern troops are stationed in Adyan province east of Aden, Western military experts said.

Correspondents said the southern forces still controlled a swathe of territory between Aden and Qatabah, in a new bid to end the conflict.

In Ryadh, Yemeni Planning Minister Abdul Karim Al Iryani said Sanaa was willing to have Arab mediation, but rejected an Egyptian proposal for an intervention force.

Previously the Sanaa leadership offered a conditional ceasefire Wednesday to Mr. Beidh's forces.

Speaking after a meeting with President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo, Yemeni Foreign Minister Mohammed Bassan-dawa called on Mr. Beidh, Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) supporters to surrender, prom-

(Continued on page 5)

Israel: Handover on May 18

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel's cabinet on Wednesday unanimously approved the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord and a timetable for withdrawal that will take Israeli troops out of the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho by next Friday.

At the same time he did not deny the accord was a gamble.

"There is no agreement without compromises or concessions on both sides, if both are to adhere to it," Mr. Rabin said. "There is no agreement that does not entail certain risks and such is the accord laid before the parliament."

The prime minister's speech to the Knesset was an attempt to silence criticism, emphasizing how little Israel had actually surrendered.

Two-hour session to withdraw troops from the autonomous regions and hand over power to the PLO by next Wednesday.

"The government approved the agreement unanimously. But what is important now is to pay attention to the timetable. The timetable is very defined," said Mr. Sarid.

He said that on Friday Israel would hand over to the Palestinians the southern part of the Gaza Strip and all of Jericho. By next Wednesday, authority for Gaza City and the northern part of the coastal strip would be transferred to the Palestinians, Mr. Sarid said.

"This means that from next Wednesday all of the responsi-

(Continued on page 5)

Buthelezi, Winnie in cabinet

PRETORIA (AP) — Nelson Mandela on Wednesday included his chief black rival in the cabinet of South Africa's first post-apartheid government and gave his estranged wife a deputy minister post.

Zulu nationalist leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi became home affairs minister, while Winnie Mandela was named deputy minister of arts, culture, science and technology.

The 27-member cabinet — comprising 18 from Mr. Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), six from former President F. W. de Klerk's National Party (NP) and three from Mr. Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) — was sworn in at the Union Buildings and launched its first meeting. It is led by Mr. Mandela, the president, and deputy presidents De Klerk and Tha-

bo Mbeki of the ANC. Mr. Buthelezi was expected to join the cabinet after Inkatha won just over 10 per cent of the vote in last month's all-race election, entitling the party to three cabinet seats.

But the inclusion of Mrs. Mandela, even as a deputy minister, came as a surprise, especially after Mr. Mandela pointedly refused to acknowledge her presence during the first meeting of the new parliament Monday.

As head of the ANC women's league, Mrs. Mandela has wide support among women and militant youths who cheer her fiery rhetoric against the legacy of apartheid. Her appointment culminates a remarkable political comeback after her 1991 conviction on kidnapping charges, allegations of an extra-marital affair.

The ministry also handles the bureaucracy of government documents, such as passports, identity books and visas.

(Continued on page 5)

PLO reformists gain strength ahead of self-rule

By Lannis K. Andoni

DELIBERATIONS to form a Palestinian authority have triggered an unprecedented internal power struggle as Palestinian officials and leaders seem determined to put an end to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat's single-handed leadership prior to moving to Jericho and Gaza.

So far most PLO officials and leaders from the Israeli-occupied territories have decided to take part in the 25-member authority either in protest against the agreement on Palestinian autonomy signed in Cairo on May

4, or against Mr. Arafat's autocratic style, which they fear will dominate the new authority.

Prior to Mr. Arafat's departure for South Africa to attend the inauguration of President Nelson Mandela, the PLO leadership in Tunis challenged his attempt to singlehandedly appoint the Palestinian authority.

But, during his brief stay in South Africa, the PLO chairman defied the challenge by appointing by telephone four members from the occupied territories.

So far the four leaders from the occupied territories, who are said to have accepted membership in the Pal-

(Continued on page 5)



His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday meets poised to enter the West Bank camped near the King Hussein Bridge

Jordan stands fully behind Palestinian rights — King

His Majesty meets police force at bridge

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday stressed that Jordan has no ambitions but to see the Palestinian people free on their national soil living the kind life which is their right.

Previously the Sanaa leadership rejected any Arab League involvement, describing the conflict as an "internal affair."

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), sacked Yemeni Oil Minister Mohammed Bassan-dawa called on Mr. Beidh, Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) supporters to surrender, prom-

ised autonomy agreement will be the start for regaining the Palestinian people's national soil.

He reassured policemen who will leave their families in Jordan that they will be taken good care of by saying that "we in Jordan stand for any one of you leaving his family for his new studies; his family will be our family and beloved ones, and you are our family and Jordan is your family with all it has."

The King wished the Palestinian forces good luck in carrying out their duties and urged them to rise to the level of the expectations of people in the occupied territories.

Second police unit enters Gaza cheered on by masses

Security force takes over Israel-evacuated base

RAFAH, occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — A contingent of 145 Palestinian policemen drove into the Gaza Strip from Egypt on Wednesday, cheered on by thousands of Palestinians by the roadside.

The government approved the agreement unanimously. But what is important now is to pay attention to the timetable. The timetable is very defined," said Mr. Sarid.

He said that on Friday Israel would hand over to the Palestinians the southern part of the Gaza Strip and all of Jericho. By next Wednesday, authority for Gaza City and the northern part of the coastal strip would be transferred to the Palestinians, Mr. Sarid said.

"This means that from next Wednesday all of the responsi-

lowered, witnesses said.

On Tuesday night, Israeli security forces quit all the Deir Al Balah area a couple of hours before the first contingent arrived from abroad, following last Wednesday's signing of the autonomy agreement.

That sparked all-night festivities which rumbled on Wednesday in Deir Al Balah, where the 160 ex-soldiers from the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) were billeted in former Israeli administration buildings.

Palestinian police commander Nas Yousef said the new contingent would be put up at former Israeli police barracks in Bureij, which Israeli forces had just handed over along with a police station on the edge of Nusseirat. Both towns are in the middle of Gaza.

As the news spread, hundreds of Palestinians poured onto the streets around the facilities, shouting pro-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) slogans, to mark the occupation in Deir Al Balah, the first area to taste freedom under the PLO-Israel accord.

More than 20 uniformed Palestinian police received the keys to the buildings from the Israelis and hoisted the red, green, white and black flag after the star of David was

lowered, witnesses said.

On Tuesday night, Israeli security forces quit all the Deir Al Balah area a couple of hours before the first contingent arrived from abroad, following last Wednesday's signing of the autonomy agreement.

They bad the right to bear arms because they were under occupation, but now we will work in an organised manner for control," Mr. Yousef said.

Preparations were underway for a transfer to Palestinian police in Jericho, where a clash erupted with Israeli soldiers. The trouble started when soldiers moved to clear the town of reporters, dragging some out by their arms and legs.

Angry Palestinians booted, prompting a round of stun grenades, teargas and rubber bullets. Soldiers ordered local merchants to close, cursing them.

The army spokesman's office said it was checking on the reason for the action.

Freedom House lauds Jordan media reforms

WASHINGTON (USA) — A noted human rights organisation has identified Jordan as the only Arab country to make progress last year towards a free press.

Freedom House's 1994 report on worldwide press freedoms quoted a specialist who wrote, "for all its shortcomings, the Jordanian press ... is the most level-headed and reliable in the Arab World."

Political reforms in Jordan represent real — albeit "insufficient" — change, Freedom House concluded. Its analysts gave the country a "low-level yet partly free press rating," noting that journalists there are still licensed by the state, imported publications are still

subject to censorship and that certain subjects remain taboo.

Freedom House, which has carried out an annual survey of press freedom since 1979, examined the status of print and broadcast media in 186 countries and classified each as "free," "partly free," or "not free." Its 1994 report gave 36.6 per cent of the countries a "free press" rating.

Nevertheless, Israel was the only country in the Middle East to earn the "free press" rating. Throughout the region, strict government control of the media is common and "change comes slowly," Freedom House reported.

The ratings were based on four criteria: the influence of laws and rules governing the media; the extent of political pressures and controls on media content; the extent of economic influences from government or elsewhere; and cases of overt repressive

actions, ranging from self-censorship to the killing of journalists.

Based on those criteria, "Israel barely retains its free press status," Freedom House said, noting specifically the military censorship associated with Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands.

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Lebanon, which once boasted "the freest media in the Middle East," moved into Freedom House's "partly free" column. Concerns cited by the organisation included the government's sporadic banning of certain newspapers and the fact that "a single large investor controls the public portion of the state television network."

Kuwait joined the former Soviet republics of Belarus and Georgia as countries that were reclassified from "partly free" to "not free."

Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Oman, Qatar, Sudan, Syria and the United Arab Emirates all earned a "not free" press rating from Freedom House: the media in Bahrain, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen were classified as "partly free."

Middle East News

Details of transfer get under way in Jericho

JERICHO, occupied West Bank (AP) — Leafing through a stack of folders, an Israeli health official laid out for a Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) delegation what was in store once they took over Jericho hospital from the Israeli military government.

"You've got clean linens for today," Yossi Schachter, head of the military government's health services, said Tuesday during a tour of the hospital.

Mr. Schachter said Israel would pay the employees' wages through May and leave behind a three-month supply of medicine.

Such briefings took place at some 20 sites Tuesday in Jericho, the future seat of the PLO government, as the nitty-gritty process of transferring power began in earnest.

The 10-member PLO delegation visited schools, a post office, the income tax department and even archaeological sites, all run now by Israel but soon to come under Palestinian control.

The formal transfer of power will not take place until the first contingent of Palestinian

police arrives in town sometime later this week, said Brigadier General Gadi Zohar, head of the West Bank military bridge.

Still, Palestinians were quick to hoist their flag over several of the buildings Tuesday.

A bed-sheet-sized flag was draped over the entrance of Tel Jericho, an archaeological site containing remains of 23 cities with the earliest dating back 10,000 years.

Five tourist buses had Palestinian flags pinned under the front windshield, courtesy of the local restaurant owner.

"We came to see the archaeological digs, but what is going on here today is just as fascinating," said Gert Thaeis, 67, a Christian pilgrim from the small town of Breidenbach, in southern Germany.

As he spoke, Major General Ilan Biran, head of the army's central command, chatted with Palestinians at the entrance to the archaeological dig after taking a last look from a hill overlooking the city.

Palestinians pressed Gen. Biran for word on when the Palestinian police, waiting

since Sunday on the Jordanian side of the King Hussein bridge, would finally be allowed to cross.

"We are ready to let them pass any moment. You have to ask (PLO leader Yasser) Arafat about the delay," Gen. Biran told the crowd.

He said that under the autonomy accord, Mr. Arafat would first have to name his 24-member national council before the police could be deployed.

A sensitive site during the tour was the Peace Upon Israel synagogue which is to be run by the Palestinians while Jewish worshippers will be given prayer rights.

The two-storey building on the outskirts of town had become a rallying site for Jewish settlers making a last-ditch stand against implementing the autonomy accord.

When PLO official Naim Abu Al Homous pulled up Tuesday to inspect the synagogue, about a dozen Jewish seminary students and right-wing legislator Hanan Porat, a patron of the settler movement, were inside.

Mr. Porat came out and complained that he had not been notified.

"We find it unacceptable that you coordinate with the Palestinian administration before you coordinate with us," Mr. Porat told an Israeli general who was briefing Mr. Abu Al Homous.

"In the meantime, we are not transferring anything to the Palestinians," said the Israeli officer, who did not identify himself. "We are just showing them the seminary."

Pointing to Mr. Abu Al Homous, Ms. Porat said, "who is this man?"

Mr. Abu Al Homous introduced himself and added: "You are a member of parliament, right?"

"Member of Parliament Hanan Porat, a good neighbour," Mr. Porat responded before the tour began.

Mr. Abu Al Homous said later the Palestinian authority would permit Jews to pray at the synagogue.

"The Palestinian people respect all kinds of religions," he said. "This is our way, and we will keep it."

Israel says 3,000 Palestinians returned

CAIRO (R) — Israel has allowed around 3,000 Palestinians to return to the Gaza Strip and West Bank in the last seven months under a family reunification scheme agreed last October, an Israeli said Tuesday.

Yossi Hadass, leading an Israeli delegation to multilateral talks on Middle East refugees, said the returning Palestinians were part of an Israeli commitment to allow up to 6,000 refugees to return annually.

"From October 1993 to the end of April Israel granted 1,993 applications, covering (the return of) around 3,000 people," Mr. Hadass told Reuters after the first day of talks.

The three-day Cairo conference, chaired by Canada, is the fifth session to be held under the U.S.-Russian sponsored Middle East peace conference.

At the last meeting in Tunis in October 1993 Israel and the Palestinians agreed on procedures for reunification of families. Wider talks on the return of refugees displaced since Israel's creation in 1948 will be held separately.

"A just solution for the Palestinian refugees problem cannot be postponed indefinitely or swept under the carpet," Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said at the start of the conference.

"The continued support of the international community is paramount and imperative for providing hope for the future."

Chief Palestinian delegate Elias Sanbar, a Paris-based history professor, said after Tuesday's talks Israel had not provided him with a list of names of the returning refugees, "but we have no reason to doubt

outside their camp after removing their penises. Before the hostilities we were living like brothers. But they showed their real face during these hostilities."

The youngest of the wounded, Najib Mursid, 14, said he was recruited by a southern brigade and "because I'm an orphan and jobless I accepted their offer a month ago."

Najib, suffering a broken leg and arm and wounds to his abdomen, said others of his age had also joined up.

"All of us have a feeling of resentment over the fighting," said First Lieutenant Abdullah Ahmad Hussein from a southern brigade and "because I'm an orphan and jobless I accepted their offer a month ago."

"They acted like beasts," said Abdullah Said Nagui, a northerner of the Amalqa Brigade.

"When they captured some of our colleagues they brought them in cars and left them

MAZAR-E-SHARIF, Afghanistan (R) — Afghan warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum said on Tuesday commanders loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani wanted to intensify fighting in the north and he had no option but to fight back.

General Dostum, who together with Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar leads an alliance fighting to topple Mr. Rabbani, said in an interview the president was "fighting against the nation."

"The attitude of some of President Rabbani's commanders means that fighting might escalate in the north of the country," he said at a military base west of Mazar-e-Sharif town.

He did not elaborate but his remarks seemed to refer to recent attacks by forces loyal to Mr. Rabbani on northern towns controlled by Gen. Dostum and Mr. Hekmatyar.

Mr. Rabbani's administration said on Monday its forces had captured the northern town of Baghlan on Sunday after two days of heavy fighting. But a spokesman for Mr. Hekmatyar denied the report and said the town was still held by Hezb forces.

Gen. Dostum said he welcomed any attempt to bring peace to war-devastated Afghanistan and particularly that of special U.N. peace envoy former Tunisian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mestiri who visited the region last month.

Gen. Dostum, who controls the strongest military force in northern Afghanistan, said his Jumbish-e-Milli party was an independent and strong organization.

"We hold considerable areas and forces and nobody can contradict nor refute our capability," said the former com-

mander general who helped

Mujaheedin guerrillas take power two years ago after 14 years of civil war when he switched over to them to topple former Soviet-backed President Najibullah.

Gen. Dostum criticise Mr. Rabbani for insisting to remain in power as president and said: "He is fighting against the nation."

While favouring the U.N. peace mission, Gen. Dostum said his party had rejected a peace move by Justice Minister Jalaluddin Haqqani, who has been trying to reach some sort of a settlement.

Mr. Haqqani had completely ignored the Jumbish-e-Milli party, he said. "There has not been any sort of consultation with us."

Gen. Dostum said Mr. Mestiri had asked both sides to stop air strikes against each other when he visited Afghanistan last month but that he told the envoy that Mr. Rabbani would not do that.

"Yesterday Rabbani's side bombed the Mazar-e-Sharif airport," he said of two raids by presidency-controlled aircraft. "There is no other option but to continue fighting as President Rabbani is not in favour of bringing it to an end."

He denied Mr. Rabbani's charge that his war effort was backed by neighbouring Uzbekistan and said income from enterprises in Mazar-e-Sharif such as fertiliser and cement factories was enough to run his administration.

Gen. Dostum said he had contracts with private companies in Russia and Belarus to supply fuel for his aircraft.

"When we buy 100 tonnes of fuel, we keep 50 tonnes for ourselves and the rest we sell to civilians."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israeli cult siege ends peacefully

TEL AVIV (R) — Armed followers of a charismatic Israeli rabbi surrendered peacefully early on Wednesday to police who had laid siege to their fortified compound near Tel Aviv, police said. Early into the 24-hour standoff, police shot dead an army deserter inside the building in the working class town of Yehud after he opened fire on a police helicopter. About 800 police, including a crack anti-terrorist unit, had besieged the house since Tuesday morning after arresting Rabbi Uzi Meshulam at a nearby location. Rabbi Meshulam's group of Jews of Yemeni descent demand a state inquiry into the alleged disappearance of Jewish children who immigrated to Israel from Yemen 45 years ago. Police said 36 people holed up in the building surrendered after lengthy negotiations with police and were arrested. An undisclosed number of women and children were allowed to remain inside. National police chief Assaf Hefetz told a news conference that eight M-16 assault rifles, three Uzi submachineguns, seven handguns and a large quantity of ammunition were found in the house. Another 30 of Rabbi Meshulam's followers were detained on Tuesday at roadblocks and houses near the compound. The rabbi and his followers turned the house in Yehud into a fortress six weeks ago and swaggered around the neighbourhood with automatic weapons. The rabbi and his followers, believed to number several hundreds, contend that immigrant children from Yemen were stolen from their parents and sold to childless Jewish couples of European descent in the 1950s. Officials have disputed the claim. At least one member of parliament has demanded an official inquiry.

Iraq to close its mission in Australia

CANBERRA (AFP) — The Iraqi government has told Canberra it plans to close its diplomatic mission here to cut costs. Australian officials said Wednesday. A number of other overseas Iraqi offices have been or will be closed, they said. Iraqi Charge D'Affaires Kamal Issa is expected to leave soon along with other members of his staff, although the chancery building and head of mission residence are being retained for the present. Officials here say other second-tier Iraqi missions, in South Korea, Argentina and Hungary, are also expected to close for financial reasons. Some first-tier Iraqi missions have been closed within the last six months. No Iraqi spokesperson was immediately available for comment.

Moroccan prince donates \$1m for Princeton institute

PRINCETON (AP) — A Moroccan prince donated \$6 million to Princeton University on Tuesday to set up an institute for studying the Islamic World stretching from Northern Africa to Central Asia. The Mohammad V Institute for the Trans-Regional Study of the Contemporary Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia will explore Islamic cultures and the challenges posed by western democracies and global capitalism, university officials said. Prince Moulay Hicham Benabdellah, who graduated from Princeton in 1985 with a bachelor's degree in politics, made the gift and named the institute to honour his grandfather, the ruler who led Morocco to independence from France in 1956. "It is imperative for the sake of my countrymen, and of all the peoples of these regions, that our future exchanges with Western nations be marked by the sort of profound respect that can lead to true cooperation and real peace," the prince said in a prepared release. The institute will be part of Princeton's Centre of International Studies, which is in the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. The prince's gift will endow positions for a visiting professorship, a visiting fellow and a permanent director of the institute. It will sponsor conferences, seminars and instruction. The institute's area of study covers a diverse group of regions and peoples stretching from Morocco in the west and Sudan in the south to Pakistan in the east and the Caucasus in the north. Arabic is the predominant language and Islam the religion of the area. But Turkish, Persian, Hebrew, Urdu and other languages are also spoken, and Christianity, Judaism and religions considered pagan or animistic also practised.

Egypt bars distribution of English weekly

CAIRO (AP) — Information Ministry censors have banned distribution of the Egyptian edition of the Middle East Times for the second time in three weeks, the newspaper said in a statement. The English-language weekly is written and edited in Egypt but printed in Greece. It generally appears on Egyptian newsstands starting Monday. The move comes amid a series of government actions limiting press coverage. Foreign reporters have frequently been barred from the trials of extremists accused of anti-government attacks. In recent weeks, Western reporters and photographers were roughed up by Egyptian security forces while covering demonstrations. Late last month, a reporter for the opposition newspaper Al Shaaib was ordered to jail by a military court for reports related to U.S.-Egyptian military maneuvers. Other reporters for opposition papers face libel or slander charges for articles on corruption. Nicolas Pelham, who edits the Egyptian Edition, said: "We've been told there is a chance the paper might be barred from the country indefinitely." The paper has been published for 11 years. He said he did not believe the action was because the paper is owned by supporters of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. The Washington Times in Washington, D.C., is a "sister paper," he said. The Middle East Times also plans a Lebanon edition. There was no answer at the ministry's censorship office. The statement by the Middle East Times said Egyptian censors objected to three articles in this week's edition concerning Muslim militants, domestic violence and security surrounding a recent international telecommunications conference in Cairo. It added that the paper was particularly angered by the action because after four issues were banned last year, the Middle East Times "agreed with the censors to show them potentially sensitive articles before these were published." It added: "It was made known to us, unofficially, that we must not criticise the president or the state military in a way likely to be 'harmful' to the national interest." The Egyptian edition has a circulation of about 7,000 in the region, with the bulk of the copies sold in Cairo, Mr. Pelham said.

Wounded troops voice anger at Yemen war

SANA (R) — The wounded of Yemen's civil war brooded Tuesday over what they called futile political rivalries pitting Yemeni against Yemeni.

Captive southerners lay beside northerners in wards in the military hospital in the Yemen capital of Sanaa in the north. Most were aged from 14 to 30, but the youngest was just 14.

"Had we directed our fire against Israel we would have achieved something," said Second Lieutenant Abdulla Ali Abdullah of the southern army which has been fighting northern foes in a week-old war.

"But victor and vanquished in this battle will have a black page in history."

"These are regrettable events," said Abd-Rabuh Mohammad Saleh, a 28-year-old soldier from the north's

eighth brigade.

"The two sides are to blame for it."

The southerners, perhaps understandably, showed no sign of hostility to their captors despite serious wounds, including burns, suffered in the fighting racking this impoverished Arabian Peninsula state of 13 million people.

The former North and South Yemen stationed some troops in each other's territory under a 1990 merger that now lies in shreds. The move was aimed at eventual military merger but integration was never achieved.

Zayed Abdulla Ghazi from a southern armoured brigade, suffering gunshot fractures, said his unit had lived in peace for four years with northern troops after the merger.

"When they captured some of our colleagues they brought them in cars and left them

outside their camp after removing their penises. Before the hostilities we were living like brothers. But they showed their real face during these hostilities."

The youngest of the wounded, Najib Mursid, 14, said he was recruited by a southern brigade and "because I'm an orphan and jobless I accepted their offer a month ago."

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He did not elaborate but his remarks seemed to refer to recent attacks by forces loyal to Mr. Rabbani on northern towns controlled by Gen. Dostum and Mr. Hekmatyar.

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"We hold considerable areas and forces and nobody can contradict nor refute our capability," said the former com-

Prosecutor drops charges against 2 in Sidon trial

SIDON (AP) — The prosecutor in the trial of two Palestinians accused of the 1984 assassination of a Libyan dissident in Berlin has dropped the charge and asked the court for their release.

The request by Prosecutor Hamed Madhi could clear the way for the extradition of one of the accused, Yasser Chreidi, to stand trial in Germany for the murder of Libyan Mustafa Ashak and the 1986 discotheque bombing.

Mr. Madhi told the criminal court Tuesday that the 1984 killing of Ashak in West Berlin had political motives, and thus was covered by a 1991 general amnesty for political crimes committed during Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war.

"Therefore, the prosecution asks for the release of the accused," Mr. Madhi told the three-man tribunal convened in the southern provincial capital of Sidon.

Mr. Chreidi, who worked as a driver at the Libyan diplomatic mission in communist East Berlin, was also implicated in the April 5, 1986, bombing of the La Belle discotheque in West Berlin, which was frequented by American servicemen. Two off-duty U.S. officers and a Turkish woman were killed and about 230 people wounded.

Mr. Chreidi also denied involvement in the bombing

Home News



In'am Mufti (centre) Wednesday briefs members of the Swiss association 'Arc-en-Ciel Famille d'Esprit' on Noor Al Hussein Foundation activities

Visiting Swiss NGO tours NHF

AMMAN (J.T.) — A group of 17 women from the Swiss association "Arc-en-Ciel Famille d'Esprit" (Rainbow Family Spirit) Wednesday visited Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) where they were received by In'am Mufti, adviser to Her Majesty Queen Noor for planning, development and NHF international relations.

Mrs. Mufti and senior NHF staff briefed the group on NHF's development philosophy and strategies which focus on family and community development, women, children, promotion of culture and heritage, and are experts in the field of Islamic cultures and global issues.

The visiting group then

toured NHF's Jordan Design and Trade Center (JDTC) which includes special selections of woolen rugs, embroidered home furnishings, ceramics, glassware, basketry, fashionable clothing, wrought iron furniture, personal accessories and Islamic calligraphy items — all designed and produced by more than 3,000 Jordanian crafts men and women.

Mrs. Mufti told the group that as NHF's JDTC seeks to raise the standards of Jordanian handicrafts production, improve marketing opportunities for crafts, create new jobs and increase women's involve-

ment in production and decision making, it also aims at promoting tourism and cross cultural exchange.

The visiting group expressed their admiration of NHF's serious development endeavours and the high level of craftsmanship exhibited by the Jordan Design and Trade Center.

The 17-member visiting group includes women of different nationalities who work as volunteers in the "Arc-en-Ciel Famille d'Esprit" a non-political and non-profit association based in Berne, Switzerland and established in 1993 as a human reaction against global violence.

Sweden says an equal trade balance requires 'sophisticated' approach

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The current \$35-million trade imbalance between Jordan and Sweden, in the Scandinavian country's favour, was the focus of talks Wednesday between Minister of Trade Rima Khalaf and the Swedish Trade Council (STC) delegation visiting Jordan.

The prince's visit is the first time a visiting delegation from the institute's sister country has been invited to Jordan.

Ambassador Christian Bausch said that although he was sympathetic to Jordanian desires to work towards equalising the deficit, Jordanian exporters need to approach Sweden's markets

"in a more sophisticated way." Although Sweden has an "open market" with a "very high import rate," its major import demands are for prefabricated components for industrial manufacturing and machinery, and not for raw materials, he said.

He added that a workshop had been held in Jordan in the summer of 1990 to inform the nation's exporters about dealing with Sweden's markets, "but then it is up to the private sector to follow it up and make a decision."

"We are a free market economy, and while the government can encourage and facilitate such imports, we cannot force our private sector to import."

Jordanian exports to Sweden are currently nonexistent, totalling a mere \$0.17 million in 1993.

Mr. Bausch said that in spite of the present situation, Jordanian exporters should not despair in trying to crack open the markets of developed industrial countries such as Sweden.

"We and western Europe are a tough market — but once you're in it, it's a good market," he said.

The STC delegation returns to Sweden today (Thursday).

A creator's sense of theme, harmony

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "My paintings have no meaning — I only see them as a document of a certain day and time," says Iraqi artist Mohammad Muhradin, who is currently displaying a collection of his work at the Al Ab'aad Art Gallery in Amman.

Mr. Muhradin explained that he never has a fixed idea or concept when he begins a painting.

"I only plan the basic pattern first, then I explore filling it in with shapes and lines, and then I rely on my intuition — the picture tells me what I need and grows by itself."

An obvious iconoclast, Mr. Muhradin adamantly rejects the idea that rules or traditions apply to art in any way or form, and his philosophy is apparent in his work — it is rather like the freeform scribbles and collages of random objects and shapes which a child might put together, except that the overall pattern and concept is guided by an adult creator's sense of theme and harmony.

He adds that he does not aim to make any social commentary in his art, as many of his contemporary Arab compatriots do, because "life always changes — and thus the ideas and interests of people and nations also change."

Instead, he says, he believes that the essence of art

Mohammad Muhradin: "(T)he picture tells me what I need and grows by itself."

is creativity and originality, stripped of all other considerations.

"This is the point which stays constant over all the millennia, from ancient Sumeria and Egypt through the time of the Greeks and Romans, and until now."

In addition, he refused to have any definitions put on his art in a regional or national sense.

"I don't feel that because I am an Iraqi, my art must have a particular style — I will use any symbol which catches my eye in my work," whether it is from the West or

the East, Iraq, America or elsewhere. "The form itself is important, not where it came from. Art and civilisation belong to all of humanity."

Mr. Muhradin (56) was born in Basra and received his training at the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad and later at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Poland.

The exhibit, which opened at the Al Ab'aad Gallery on May 2, under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Rania Abdullah, is tentatively scheduled to continue until May 16.

- ★ Field trip on Friday to Deir 'Alia, Tal Al Mazar, Tal Al Sa'diyah organised by the Friends of Archaeology. Departure will be from the Amra Hotel parking lot at 9:00 a.m. (Details Tel. 611065)
- ★ Film entitled "Meet John Doe" at the American Center on Thursday at 5:00 p.m. (120 minutes).
- ★ Choir by students of Al Ahliya School for Girls at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 4:00 p.m.
- ★ Poetry recital by Arab poets at the Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture on Thursday and Friday at 7:00 p.m. (Tel. 695291).

- ★ Lecture in Arabic on Arab capabilities after the collapse of the Soviet Union at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabel Amman on Thursday at 6:00 p.m.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by artist Salman Al Basri at Alia Art Gallery (Tel. 639303).
- ★ Book exhibition and cultural displays at the British Council (10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.).

- ★ Save The Children Projects

- ★ WHAT'S GOING ON

Geologists urge end to sanctions against Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Geologists Association (JGA) Wednesday sent a message to the president of the U.N. Security Council urging him to ensure that the council end the sanctions imposed on Iraq for its occupation of Kuwait in 1990.

The blockade imposed by the "civilised" nations, the U.S., United Kingdom, France and other NATO members, on Iraq, is causing the destruction of a culture and hindering education and scientific development in the "land of Mesopotamia, the cradle of civilisation," said the message, a copy of which was sent to the Jordan Times.

The Security Council plans a review in mid-May of the oil ban imposed on Iraq for its invasion of Kuwait, and

according to an Associated Press report Monday, council members are divided on whether to ease the sanctions.

Since August of 1990, Iraq has been deprived of all kinds of international scientific and educational materials and has been completely isolated from the outside world, said the JGA statement.

"Your position of being silent is not accepted because it does not reflect the principles of democracy and the human rights you believe in," added the statement which was signed by association chairman Mohammad Al Saadeen.

The statement urged the council to end the suffering of the Iraqi children and end the inhuman act on the Iraqi people.

Dentists to hold elections

JDA members to choose from 2 men, 1 woman for president

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordan Dentists Association (JDA) will hold its elections on Friday with three candidates competing for the presidency and 17 for JDA board membership.

Sa'id Abu Mayzer, Ahmad Rashdan and Huda Fakhouri will be running for president. If elected, Dr. Fakhouri will become the first ever woman in the history of Jordanian associations to become president.

Dr. Fakhouri, who has been in practice since 1969, told the Jordan Times that it is the right time for her to run for elections.

"I have been a member in the union for more than 25 years, and I feel that I can run the union efficiently based on my legislative and rules experiences in this

field," Dr. Fakhouri said.

"Women have made it to Parliament, ministries, the Senate and other important positions, and I believe it is time for a woman to represent her own sex in a union so that other women would think of running for elections in the future," she added.

Dr. Fakhouri said she plans on improving and developing laws and legislation in the union as well as other important issues.

Dr. Rashdan, a graduate of the University of Cairo, said his campaign will focus on bolstering the association's development, and qualitative transformation of the previous association's programmes.

He said his campaign is posing questions on what could be done to improve the association, and responding to those very questions.

Dr. Abu Mayzer, who

graduated from Damascus University in 1978, said his campaign will concentrate on improving the association and professionalism levels.

Some rules and regulations should be amended in order to the JDA to absorb the increasing number of dentists.

Running for board seats are Ahmad F. Ismail, Azem Qadoumi, Narsala Nasralla, Faouzi Petro, Salem Karadsh, Haikel Haikel, Haytham Naji, Aomra Kabeer, Abdullah Khatib, Yahya Kamal, Mahmoud Sharaa, Mohammad Ismail, Hisham Karadsh, George Haddad, Hussein Laffy, Issam Zareini and Mazen Safadi.

About 800 association members of the 2,300 registered in the JDA will elect the president and the eight-board members Friday for a two-year term.



Royal Scientific Society Vice President Saeed Alloush (right) and head of a visiting team from the Council for Scientific and

Jordan, South Africa to start cooperation in energy fields

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanians and South Africans are launching close cooperation in scientific fields and focusing first on renewable energy and water technology and related environmental management, according to Saeed Alloush, vice president of the Royal Scientific Society (RSS).

The RSS arrived at an agreement on these areas with a team from the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in South Africa which ends a week-long visit to Jordan. Thursday, Dr. Alloush told the Jordan Times Wednesday.

To implement the agreement, Dr. Alloush said, the two sides agreed on the exchange of experts, information and the training of personnel.

The RSS and the CSIR Wednesday also signed an executive programme to be implemented in full before the end of 1994, said Dr. Alloush.

In accordance with the programme, a team of scientists from CSIR will come to the RSS to work out final proposals on renewable energy matters that would be approved later by the two sides, and an RSS team of experts will visit South Africa to discuss and finalise proposals on cooperation in water-related issues, Dr. Alloush added.

During their visit to Jordan, the CSIR team toured the RSS's departments, as well as industries and projects run in cooperation with the RSS, including firms which manufacture solar beaters, said Dr. Alloush.

Dr. Alloush said he signed the cooperation agreement with the S. African team leader, Reine Biesenbach.



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Political course, Arab solution

NEITHER SIDE in the Yemeni war appears able to score a decisive victory in spite of early reports that forces from the north loyal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh were holding the edge. Seven days after the start of the hostilities between the north and the south of Yemen, President Saleh has not gotten anywhere near winning the armed conflict. It is therefore clear that the civil war in Yemen is heading towards a stalemate necessitating a political solution rather than a military one.

There is a sign already that this approach has to be adopted after the Arab League offered the use of its good offices and Sanaa decided to send envoys to Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Yemeni Vice President Ali Salem Al Beidh also last week signalled his willingness to accept Arab mediation when he called His Majesty King Hussein at the beginning of the war.

Any impending political solution would entail the return to the Yemeni accord signed in Amman last February. The Amman formula in fact offered the only viable way to resolve the problems between Aden and Sanaa. It did that by presenting workable ways to integrate the armed forces of the two areas and charting the way for full unity in the country. The fact that both President Saleh and President Beidh have freely negotiated the Amman accord and accepted it thus makes it the only reasonable basis to stop the fighting and start anew.

The main point is to keep these attempts alive and to confine them to an Arab framework. The Kuwaiti situation must never be allowed to repeat itself. The Arab League must be given the opportunity to intervene politically and even militarily if necessary to first end the hostilities and then deal with the political and economic dimensions of the internal conflict. The Arab heads of state must also apply their clout in that direction by making their preference for a political solution loud and clear. Usually an Arab crisis of this kind would make the convening of an Arab summit a sure option. There is hardly a whisper of this idea much less real talk about it. We think this kind of Arab "indifference" must be reversed, and the return to the principle of holding an emergency Arab summit whenever circumstances warrant it needs to be reinstated. The scars of the Gulf crisis and war cannot hold up Arab concerted actions forever and the Yemeni conflict offers the occasion to do just that and reverse the tide of Arab inaction.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THERE ARE indications coming out from Yemen that the conflict between the northerners and the southerners will be long and painful for both sides, said Al Dastoor daily Wednesday. Civil wars are usually more painful and more costly in life and property than wars between nations; and in the case of Yemen, the war is more horrible as both sides possess modern weapons used by regular armies, said the daily. It should be noted as well, said the paper, that the longer the civil war lasts, the deeper becomes the hatred between the combatants and more difficult will be the chances for reconciliation. The civil war in Yemen is now a week old, but war communiques issued by the two sides all indicate that they are adamant in their position, which means the war and the bloodshed will continue, the paper added. It said that the only way out of the sufferings and the ordeal facing the Yemeni people is for their leaders to opt for dialogue to end the conflict and to prevent further casualties and more loss of property; and above all, to prevent foreign intervention in the country's internal affairs.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily pointed out the fact that the Israelis have been celebrating the anniversary of their annexation of Arab Jerusalem in an unprecedented manner this week at a time when arrangements are underway for the start of the Palestinian self-rule. How can U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher persuade the Arab parties to resume the peace process in light of Israel's provocative measures, and how can the Arabs be persuaded that Israel is genuinely oriented towards peace with the Arabs, asked Ibrahim Al Absi.

The View From Academia

Arab society and the challenge of pluralism

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

CURRENTLY, Arab society is going through an extremely difficult and extremely exciting phase. The expectations are great, but so are the risks involved. One crucial challenge with which we have to come to grips sooner or later, if we are to "emerge" into the fast-approaching world of the 21st century healthier and stronger than we have been in the present century, is the apt awareness and recognition of our own pluralism.

Let me begin with two small anecdotes. A few weeks ago, the English Department at Yarmouk University took a group of its students to Amman to watch a performance of Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew," an important happening which was attended by a very interesting mixture of students representing various colleges and schools in the Kingdom. On our way back to Irbid, the conversation centred not so much on the show (as might be expected) but on our students' close but brief and puzzling encounter with what they called the "Ammanis," most of whom were high school pupils.

The Yarmouk group consisted, primarily, of junior and senior English majors who came from Jordanian villages and smaller towns. Many of their comments about the said group from Amman were quite revealing, though (to me) not surprising. One student said, "Are these guys Arabs? Their English is way superior to ours, though they are still kids. They speak better English than the English." Another wondered: "Are they Jordanian? They do not look like us, they do not speak like us, and they do not dress like us." A third asked, "Did you see their haircuts?" I do not know what the "Ammanis" said about our students or the students from Mu'ta, though I can easily guess.

I had a similar experience in Egypt last August. When I asked a question in Jordanian Arabic, I discovered (to my astonishment and great dismay) that I was not at all understood in the streets of Cairo even though the question was as simple as "could you please tell me about a good restaurant where I can have my lunch" and even though I articulated the question in the clearest terms possible. Something in my accent, my diction, my style, my tone, and even my appearance stood in the way. I had often to resort to the broken Egyptian Arabic I learned from the movie or television. When I paid a visit to the Sheraton Hotel, which was swarming with Arabs of all kinds, I felt almost as estranged and alienated as I did when I first landed at JFK Airport in New York in the early 1980s.

The point to emphasise here is simply that, unlike what many of us think or would have us think, the status quo of the Arab culture, both at the regional as well as the national levels, is immensely rich, sophisticated, complex and tense. There are so many sharp differences, varieties, polarities, contrasts, oppositions and even stark contradictions — in addition, of course, to the affinities, similarities, parallels, common conceptions, shared visions and ideals. And this is a beautiful situation, potentially at least.

I am sure that our sociologists, anthropologists, and education officials have a lot to say about these two microcos-

mic anecdotes and about the other more intricate forms of heterogeneity and pluralism in our present-day Arab Nation. As for me, I wish to make the following two observations about the matter.

First, it seems quite obvious to me that we do not know ourselves very well, both regionally and at the pan-Arab level. I was talking with a friend of mine the other day. He said what is true, I believe, for a comfortable majority in the Arab World. "I am saying, and I say it with shame," he told me, "that I know the West more than I know the Arab World." Another friend of mine once said, "I have lived in Irbid all of my life, and I have not been to Syria. I visited Germany, France and Yugoslavia (formerly), but I have never thought of checking out Dir'a, which is 25 minutes away." One can think of countless examples of Jordanians who have lived their lives and died without seeing Aqaba, Wadi Rum, Petra, Irbid, the Dead Sea, Azraq and Amman. What struck me most when I moved to Irbid from Amman 10 years ago were the many misconceptions, at times silly and funny but at times truly upsetting, people from Amman hold vis-a-vis people from Irbid, and vice versa. A friend of mine who once came to visit from Amman said after I gave him a tour of the rapidly expanding city of Irbid, "you know, I thought people in Irbid were bedouins."

For a number of reasons, some understandable and some are not, the Arab of today is essentially aloof and disinterested with respect to what actually goes on around him/her in the immediate community and in the society at large — I mean in terms of real participation and effective involvement, not in terms of the circulation of hearsay, gossip and information communicated second or third-hand.

What is most worrying, in this particular respect, is the absence (totally or partially) of real dialogue within the various communities in each individual Arab country and within the Arab World as a whole. Most of our encounters with Arab nationals visiting our country or residing in it, when they do visit and reside (aside from our Egyptian and Iraqi brothers, with whom we inevitably interact) are either trifle or casual. Part of it is that the Arab of today is generally either unintellectual or anti-intellectual. He is much more likely to be excited by a cheap Egyptian TV soap opera or at the sight of a man than about a serious conversation with a fellow countryman or an exchange of views with an Arab "brother." This applies almost as much to the man in the street as to the college professor.

Other cultures have understood themselves better and have identified their own intrinsic varieties more crystallly than we have; they speak of high culture, popular culture, low culture, counter culture, ethnic culture, dominant culture, marginal culture, the culture of the underground, urban culture and suburban culture. In the Arab World, most of what we talk about is related to three categories: urban culture, countryside culture and bedouin culture — primarily in broad term. With the introduction of democracy in Jordan, which is a blessing in many ways, we are beginning to feel lucky for a fruitful

dialogue is beginning to emerge among the various ethnic, political, economic, regional and power groups.

Secondly, there is a wide discrepancy between what we are told we are or what we think we are on the one hand and what we truly are on the other. This paradox is important to explicate if we are to become adequately aware of our identity. Much of our conception of ourselves as Arabs stems not from our conscious daily experience, our profound perusal of ourselves, our study of our communities or our diligent interaction with the various intrinsic components of our culture, but from what we are told in the radio, the press, the family and the school — which is too idyllic and idealistic. Our sense of our identity (I firmly believe) is mainly theoretical. We are informed in our history, geography, and theology lessons that we are (present, I mean) one nation, speaking one language, professing one faith, sharing one dream, one geographic unity. And we simply swallow. I am not saying that what we are taught is false, i.e. that we are not Arabs and Muslims. No. What I am saying, rather, is that our view of ourselves is either too simplistic or too metonymic. And this is what causes the shock (as in the two anecdotes).

I would go as far as to say that the Arab of today is suffering from what one may best call cultural schizophrenia. We live, that is, in two worlds simultaneously: the very ideal and the very real, but not in a healthy mixture of both. We have convinced ourselves that the Arab World is our homeland, and yet the basic we go through at the border when we travel from one Arab country to another is 20 times more than that we go through when we travel to Honolulu. Worse yet, try to obtain a visa to one of the sacred Arab countries (let's not name them). Quite simply, we are either too romantic in our conception of ourselves as Arabs or too downright realistic in the one we feel too comfortable, in the other we feel too uncomfortable. There is no middle-ground. Understandably, we often prefer to live in the former.

Such schizophrenia can be disastrous at times. Look at what is happening to our Yemeni brothers, look at the violence in Egypt, in Algeria, and to the messy situation in Lebanon.

We need to understand ourselves better, to recognise our differences, to create a dialogue about them, to distinguish to our youth between the ideal and the real, to teach them how to bridge the gap, and to facilitate communication within the larger Arab homeland. Is it difficult for the ministry of education to arrange frequent meetings or host joint activities involving students from Western Amman and Eastern Amman? Is it difficult for a Moroccan University to send 20 students annually to spend a semester at a Jordanian university, and vice versa? We need to open up a little to ourselves. Arab pluralism can be a blessing, if we identify it better and deal with it more effectively.

The writer is professor of American literature at Yarmouk University.

WASHINGTON WATCH

The next steps towards Palestine

By Dr. James Zogby

THE EUPHORIA that surrounded the White House signing of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) declaration of principles (DOP) was nowhere in evidence last week in Cairo at the signing of the Gaza-Jericho interim agreement.

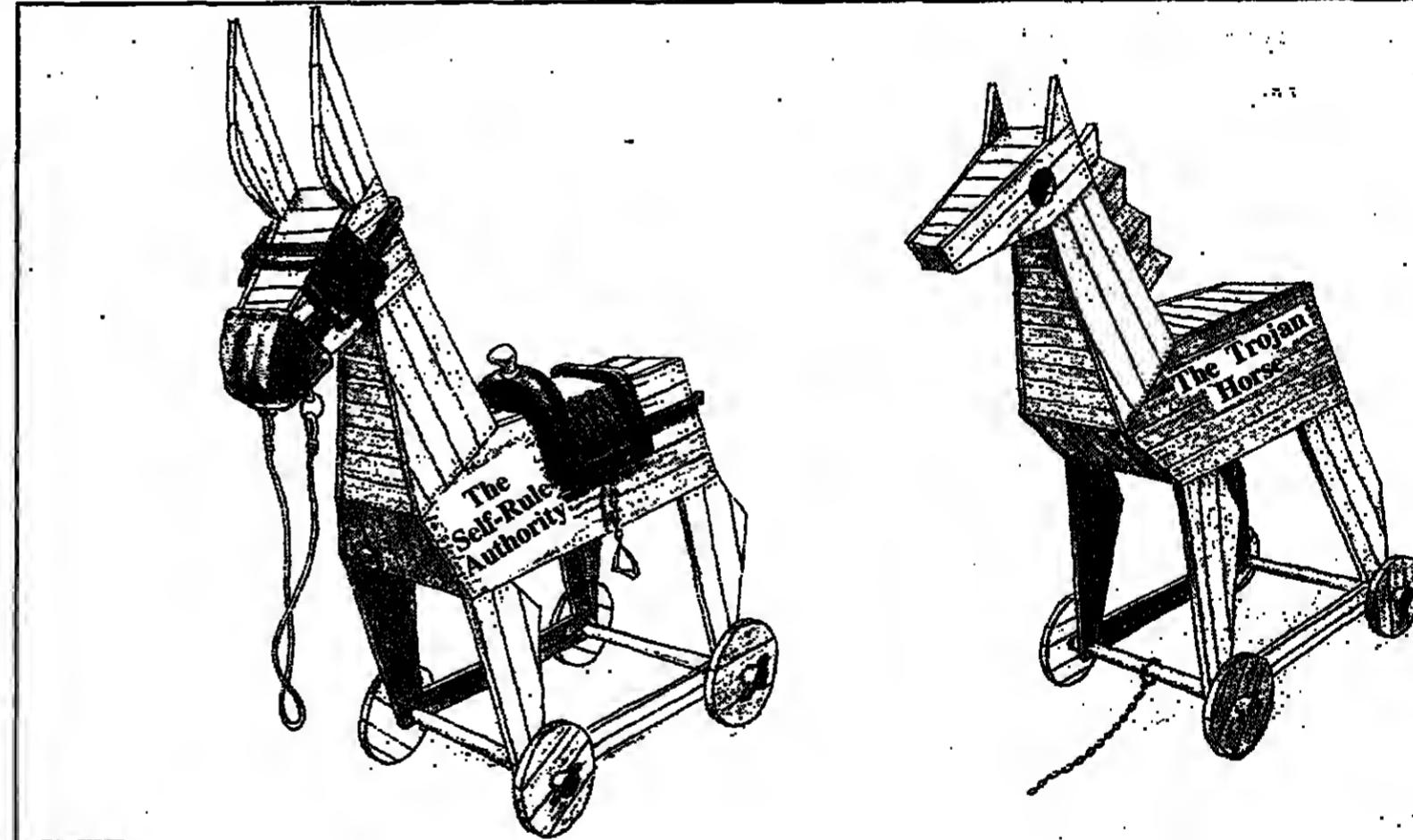
There was a heavy dose of realism in the air, a clear and unequivocal sense that the Israelis had squeezed too hard, that the Palestinians had been forced to give up too much and the agreement, while still workable, left the Palestinians in an extremely weak position.

Critics are noting that Yasir Arafat did not achieve what Nelson Mandela won in South Africa. But such comparisons are ahistoric to the point of being absurd. The campaign to make South Africa a unified democratic state had strong U.S. and European and Soviet support for decades. An effective international sanctions regime, operating with the full support of the U.S., was one of Mr. Mandela's most effective weapons.

Over the past 20 years Mr. Arafat has had, at best, the passive support of Europe and, at worst, he faced the full power and authority of the U.S. that was aligned against his movement and its aspirations. To a great extent, the problems that will be faced in implementing the Israel-PLO peace process are the result of the misinformations in Israeli and Arab politics that accumulated during the past 25 years of struggle.

The fact that the Israel-PLO conflict was a factor in the larger East-West struggle is one such factor. As a result of this dynamic, the Israelis, especially during the Reagan years, received near blank check to pursue the goals of expansion into the West Bank and Gaza, annexation of East Jerusalem and the eradication of the Palestinian national movement.

It was those pressures combined that weakened the leadership of the national movement and created the conditions which led to the emergence of regional extremist and rejectionist tendencies that are now threatening the move toward peace. No only is the Palestinian leadership a victim of extremist forces that weaken their hold, but the Israeli government is confronted by an extremist movement (including the former Likud government) that was weaned on, and some would say spoilt by, unquestioned



U.S. support and now operates as a law unto itself in Israeli society.

It is with the perspective defined by history that one can justify the current agreement.

I could agree in the abstract with the position espoused by, for example, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine that the best solution is a comprehensive peace based upon Security Resolutions 242 and 338 (and other relevant resolutions) which call for full Israeli unconditional withdrawal and the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza with its capital in East Jerusalem — but would Israel ever agree to that formula, and which U.S. administration or European government would force such a solution?

Dreams can be entertaining and even sustaining, but they are not politics and cannot survive in its light. Substituting our dreams for reality is a recipe for unmitigated disaster.

The critics aside, reality — as somber as it is — dictates that we understand the circumstances of the times before defining our goals and setting out a realistic plan to achieve them.

In this regard, the dire

warnings of the Israeli right wing can be true. The Gaza-Jericho accord can (and I believe that it is in fact) be the first step to the creation of an independent Palestinian state. The path to that end is neither neat nor quick — the details of the accord itself ensures as much — but the path is genuinely there, as the Likud and their allies can plainly see.

But it will take real hard work to travel that path, and there is a slim possibility that the Palestinian critics of the accord could also be right, that the accord could just be laying the groundwork for a continuing and grim occupation. Where those critics are wrong, however, is that the outcome will not be decided by the Israelis, the U.S. or anyone else. The Palestinian people and their leadership can now take control of their fate, and it is imperative that they take the control firmly in their grasp.

The fact that the delay in implementation and the weaknesses the accord itself has left an absence of euphoria in Palestinian society is not a bad thing. Too much euphoria would lead to expectations which would place an undue burden on the Palestinian authority. One of the greatest dangers facing

any transition government is unrealistically high expectations and the resulting political turmoil when they cannot be met (witness, for example, the difficulties in Russia and Poland). Low expectations, on the other hand, actually give the Palestinian authority some needed breathing space.

But even with this space change must occur, and the national authority must be in a position to deliver services and achieve economic growth in order to survive and expand its popular mandate. An effort must be made to mobilise Palestinian talent and resources in this nation-building phase. And institutions must be created to provide a conduit for this talent and these resources to be effectively put to work in building the nation.

Mr. Arafat has often said that the Palestinians are the state-builders of the Middle East. He speaks with pride of the role that Palestinian entrepreneurs, administrators and civil servants have played in building several Arab countries. But the question remains whether these talented and creative Palestinian leaders have been brought into the plans to help design the administration of the Gaza-Jericho areas.

Something akin to a Palestinian peace corps should be created to recruit the talent of diaspora Palestinians and bring them to work in Gaza and the West Bank, even if only for a year at a time, to share their experience in the nation-building experiment.

Palestinian and Arab capitals must find a way to be invested in the area as well — but this will not occur unless the climate is suitable for such investment is created.

To create a free-market economy that will spur rapid economic growth will require an economic plan that fosters private sector development. Tax-free enterprise zones must be created, and other incentives should be provided to lure investment to the newly autonomous areas. And ultimately, the big dream of an independent and thriving Palestinian economy will come about only if the small dreams of private investors and entrepreneurs can come true. An economic commission should be instituted to promote investment, to help grow the nascent Palestinian industry in the territories and to eliminate obstacles to match-making and implementation in the expansion of industry and

can be said about what needs to be done, especially in the area of institutionalising Palestinian democracy (which must grow to be more than the tolerance of free speech) and the continued use of non-violent direct action tactics to expand Palestinian rights and ultimately win a total end of the occupation, one final recommendation that would significantly aid in the advancement of Palestinian statehood is the need to upgrade the Palestinian mission to Washington. For too long the Palestinians have been without a serious voice in Washington. What is required is a seasoned and respected diplomat who is capable of both helping to shape the policy debate in Washington and also able to win support for Palestinian aspirations among key sectors of U.S. society. For 25 years, Palestinians fought against Washington and the U.S. policies that were hostile toward their goals.

Now is the time to take seriously the need to provide both leadership and a strategy aimed at winning U.S. support for Palestinian rights.

The writer is president at the Washington-based Arab-American Institute.

While a great deal more

Weekender

May 12, 1994

Published Every Thursday

The Romanian who brought light to many

By Ica Wahbeh

Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — The few remaining people are preparing to go back home. Their "mission" in Jordan is finished. The engineer who came "for three months" 15 years ago is leaving too. He is the head of Romelectro, the Romanian electrical company that literally brought light to 85 per cent of the kingdom.

On March 30, this year, the company finished the last connection in the grid between Zarqa and Sabha, 40 kilometres of electric cables the installation of which started in 1992.

The saga of Romelectro in Jordan started in 1979 when the company won the contract in an international bid for the construction of overhead electric lines (OHL) whose beneficiary was Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA).

The man who was sent to look after the company's works, Viorel Burla, had eight years of experience in

his country where he had already accomplished high-performance deeds in his domain, electroenergy design.

"When I first came in 1979, they picked me up at the airport in a truck. On the way to Karak (where he stayed for a year and a half) we passed by steep valleys on both sides of the road. It was scary. I was thinking that I would have to find a way to go back soon," said the geodesic engineer.

That was his first impression, but that was then. Now it is a love story with the town.

"I am most impressed with Karak. I like it most in Jordan. It is a town built on a castle. Houses are adjacent to the castle, sharing the same walls. It is a living history."

Knowing the Kingdom perhaps better than a Jordanian, Mr. Burla has criss-crossed it from north to south and from east to west. He knows the landscape, the people, the climate.

"We had no problems in

the desert. It was more difficult working in agricultural areas. One fellah, for example, complained that the electric tower will ruin his crop. We advised him to plant fruit trees. Now they are a pleasure to look at."

Still reminiscing about the first days of his stay here, he recalls being "somewhere around Karak looking for a way to install our towers". His water had finished and after long search, and almost hallucinating, he was picked up by shepherds.

"They gave me hot tea with lots of mint. I was screaming (in Romanian, of course) for some cold water, but who would understand me?" A few minutes after I drank the tea I had recovered completely. Since then, I never take cold water with me to drink. I have learned from the wisdom of the people who know better."

Listening to the blue-eyed, weather-tanned engineer who refused to go to Malaysia and Iran (in

order) to stay in Jordan, "is like travelling around and reliving the history of the last decade and a half of the country and its people.

It was not easy, he said. But fifteen years after he first arrived he is still here and from the way he talks about Jordan and the Jordanians you realise that his heart is here.

"Romania is my mother-land. Jordan is my second home," he says, his memory juggling between years of events, not always related, he was picked up by shepherds.

"We lived pioneering times. Times when we would not know how to open a line. From Karak to Ghor Safi, for example, (part of the first project executed by Romelectro for the Jordan Electricity Authority), entailing closing of the t32 kilovolt loop of the city of Amman and the beginning of 132 kv lines to the south every weekend we would walk for 14 hours from rock to rock — the lunar landscape convinced me that the moon must have started from here — trying to find a way to place our towers and installations. In Aqaba, between the power plant and the town, we could not find a way until we climbed a high mountain and had a clearer look at the landscape. We carried the poles in our arms. No car could pass," said Mr. Burla, pride shining in his eyes.

Their work means over 1,000 kilometres of cables, reaching places like Irbid, Wadi Al Arab, Aqaba, Rashidieh, Oadisieh, Al

Hasa, Al Shidieh, Maan, Tafileh, King Talal Dam, Risheh, Ruweished, Azraq, Safawi, Yarmouk, to mention only a few of the names that come so easy and natural with the experienced engineer.

Beneficiaries over the years were JEA, Jordan Electric Power Company (JEPCO), Irbid district Electricity Company (IDECO), obviously omitting the ultimate users, peoples, industries, agriculture.

Besides installing high voltage lines, Romelectro was also responsible for the installation of medium and low voltage lines and transformer substations (especially for water pumps).

And the man whose leadership made it all possible could write volumes about his experience. Real stuff and anecdotes come easily from a man with obvious narrative talent.

The basalt rock, the sand storms, the snow, the snakes, the scorpions and the human contacts are now part of his life, of his being.

"In 15 years my men and I never had a problem, never fought with anybody, never received complaints. We respect the people here and so they respect us. We are aware of the customs and understand each other very well."

If at the beginning of its work here the company was working with about 40 per cent Romanians and 60 per cent Jordanians, after 1984 the ratio became 25 per cent to 75 per cent.

"The Romanian contribution depends on highly

and multi-qualified personnel. That's what makes our prices competitive. But our material and equipment are of very good quality too and the 15 years have proved it. We never had one failure, not one line fell. When in 1986 the snow brought down the lines in Rashtieh, we were called to help reinstate them. We did it as a friendly gesture. All Tafileh was without light, we had to help," said Mr. Burla.

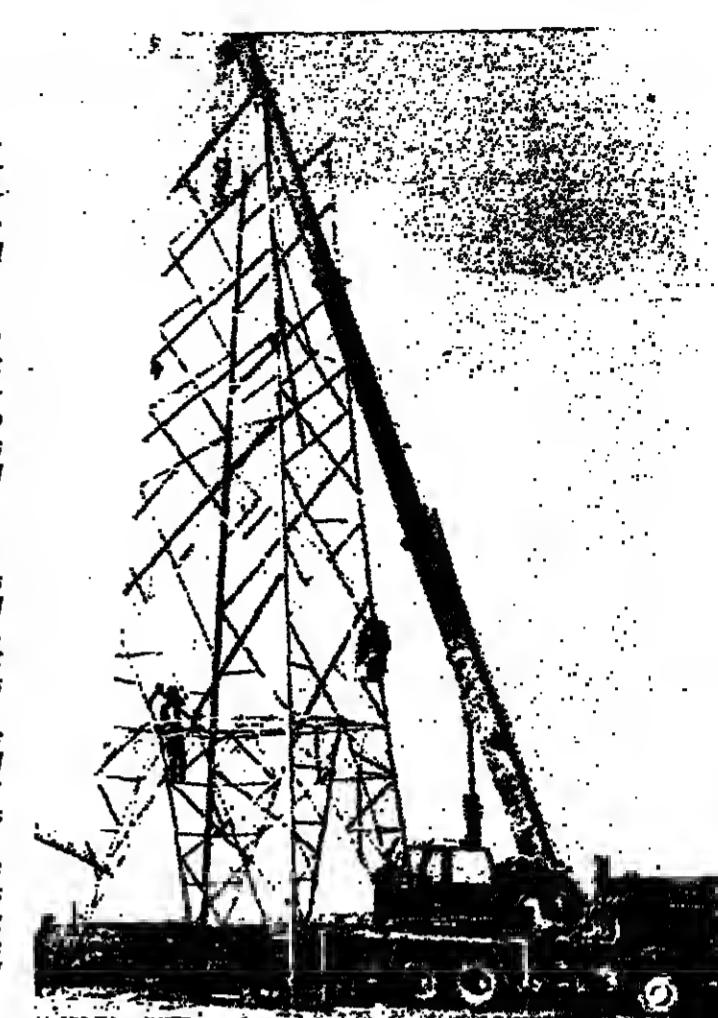
For someone who brings light to others, fate played an ironic twist. In Al Hasa, where they worked for eight months, the Romanians lived without electricity.

"There were no lines, we were installing them," said the 45-year-old OHL expert whose life experience belies his age.

"Wherever I go I see the marks we left. I always wanted to leave something behind. And when I see the towers and cables, I know I accomplished something. We gave the best we had. We cannot afford to make mistakes as they could prove to be very costly. Our reputation here should not be destroyed and I am sure, from the way things stand so far, that it will stand."

But it is not only the towers and cables that are left behind. There are also roads and trees. And they are all remembered fondly by Mr. Burla.

"On the Karak-Ghor Safi stretch we went to build a road. As we were studying all the possibilities, we found an acceptable path. When the bulldozer started



The crew erect one of the thousands of towers for the overhead electric lines

digging, we discovered a Roman road, perfectly preserved, with ruts left by chariot wheels still impressed on the stone slabs paving it. We were on the traces of our ancestors; history was coming full circle."

In Aqaba, where he planted a sapling "given by some Indian friends" in 1981, the tree now stands taller than the two-storey building it shadows. "When I went to visit the other day, the owner of the house told me: 'Whenever we stand on the balcony, we think of you'."

Well, perhaps when we put the lights on one cold night, we might also think of these people who, although seeming eager to go home, have a nostalgic look in their eyes. "For one third of my life I have lived here and have made friends here," said the engineer who is still "looking for any venue of future cooperation with Jordan."

Work continues during a sandstorm

Bringing about the desired change

By Mohammad Mashariqah

Intellectuals promoting the quality of cultural and artistic life in Jordan face the pressing question of how to fulfil this task and bring about the desired changes in people's attitude to culture and the arts.

These intellectuals, perhaps more than other sectors in society, are sensitive to and aware of the many concerns of life weighing down heavily on the minds of people, creating some kind of depression manifested in their scowling faces.

If these groups are to induce a change for the better, they have to decide whether the problem at hand is closely related to and inherent in or emanating from the community itself, or whether emerging as a result of external influences that are interacting with and having deep effect on the people's way of thinking.

Many people including myself can be classified as optimistic by nature, because they believe that endless complaints can lead nowhere, except to the path of further desperation and frustration.

I do not believe that the given material reality in life always reflects the extent of its relationship with the artistic and cultural structures or that this structure is an identical reflection of realities.

Indeed, an examining look at the intellectual and artistic groups in Jordan reveals the fact that they are largely the fruit of external influences, ideas and cultures. They have brought from outside ideas that have been intermarried or intermixed with concepts

emanating from the local community.

I present this hypothesis as a prelude to proceed to another one namely that it is man, as a human being, that matters in the first place and that he is liable to be affected by pioneering ideas which normally bring about changes in society, and not vice versa.

I profess that new and revolutionary ideas have the potential to cause the desired change in behavioural patterns and social values, and eventually create new realities on the ground.

In my view, creation of theatre houses, organising seasonal festivals and conferences in luxury surroundings serve no purpose simply because most of the organisers of such functions are not trustworthy or

AMMAN CULTURAL PULSE

task they undertake in terms of their motives and objectives.

I feel we are in need to lend more attention to creating a generation fused with the spirit of the modern age and its requirements: a generation capable of producing ideas that can be further developed through time to continually cater to the ever changing needs of society.

The world around us is undergoing perpetual and astonishingly fast changes and therefore delay by society in catching up or coping with these changes could mean its virtual death and extinction.

We have to take the first step towards change in all

aspects of life starting with children at the kindergarten level and moving on to school curricula, theatre work, music, songs, etc.

We are not in real need of more theatres or conferences to discuss issues as we have so far reached no positive solutions.

We rather need to learn new and free ways of thinking unchecked by our suspicions about the sources of new ideas because I believe we must be pragmatic in this respect only aiming at achieving good results undeterred by traditional inhibitions.

A pioneering experiment in this context can best be manifested in the so-called "theatre in education" sponsored by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF). It is indeed an example of the new way of thinking in Jordan's cultural society.

Since 1991 NHF has been holding workshops dealing with theatre work and inviting actors, directors and local artists to help develop ideas related to educational activities and also enlisting foreign expertise from the British and American cultural centres.

The latest workshops organised by NHF focused attention on the technical aspect of theatre work, such as lighting, decor and sound efforts. This aspect also involved the arrangement of theatre scenes in a way to best conform to the text. American specialist Tim Kovac is using modern educational methods to help NHF carry out its projects with the help of 30 Jordanian artists.

The three-week workshop is causing a change in the performance of our artists and will perhaps establish the

basis for creating special NHF theatre in education.

Ms Lina Tall who supervises the NHF project said that Jordan is in need of many more workshops in order to promote and sustain development in theatre work and help bring in new expertise from other countries.

She said that in 1991, the NHF in cooperation with the Kennedy Centre in New York held a workshop which helped Jordanian participants to produce four very successful plays all because they conducted teamwork.

We are in need of similar team-work here involving the effort of groups rather than individuals to ensure successful theatre work, she added.

However, the team work started by NHF workshops is now being followed by Jordanian theatre groups who have had the chance to intermingle with and learn from other groups from other countries. But we seek to universalise this spirit in Jordan and help artists to initiate theatre work and conduct plays not only in cities but rather in villages and in open public squares.

There is real need for revolutionising theatre work starting from the school level and we are in need of new and daring and non-traditional ideas. We should also try to enact laws and legislations allowing the introduction of new educational curricula in schools in Jordan.

Many Jordanians look forward to change and openness to the world and for serious work in all cultural and artistic domains because they are really fed up with traditional work that can only draw boredom and frustration.

Violent New Zealand Cannes entry is no Piano

By Michael Field

Agence France Presse
AUCKLAND — A movie which shows native Maori men as brutally violent alcoholics is being hailed here as the most important film yet out of New Zealand, while leaving its audiences stunned.

Once Were Warriors, the directing debut of Lee Tamahori, is based on the first book by Maori Alan Duff, who once termed his own people as "going nowhere nobodies."

Duff, a darling of the political right here, is as rhetorically aggressive as his characters are violent, calling those critical of the film "the tiny tots of intellectualism."

Warriors, New Zealand's entry to this year's Cannes Film Festival is a remarkable contrast to The Piano, the French-and-Australian-funded film set near here which won at Cannes last year and took three Oscars, including one for Canadian-born Anna Paquin who at 11 was Best Supporting Actress.

People who claim Maori descent account for 13 per cent of New Zealand's

population.

Yet Maori make up 50 per cent of prison population and Maori men in prison have a suicide rate eight times higher than the non-Maori rate.

Among the general population 27 per cent smoke tobacco — among Maori it is 54 per cent and 57 per cent for Maori women.

Unemployment among the white workforce is 8.3 per cent — among Maori it is 24 per cent. Over half of all Maori between 15 and 59 receive welfare. Non-Maori male life expectancy here is 73; for a Maori it is 67.

Critic John Parker in the monthly Metro magazine termed Warriors the most important film yet out of New Zealand, adding it was "terrifyingly out of most of our comfort zones."

"As a result, our vision of ourselves as New Zealanders on film will now be irreversibly changed," he wrote.

Despite their limited involvement, New Zealanders love to be identified

with The Piano. Warriors, an official entry at Cannes this year, is unlikely to inspire the same pride.

It may however have another child Oscar winner in 13-year-old Mamaengaroa Kerry-Bell, who endures incest and rape in the movie.

Columnist Frank Haden in the Sunday Star-Times said Warriors shows the shocking side of The Piano.

But he warned, "people will ask why, when Maori people have more than equal political rights, access to profitable education, pay and employment, they choose to alienate themselves into a racial underclass."

And he added: "I found absurd the cop-out excuse the film gives for (Jake's) viciousness — that you can expect no better from a descendant of the pre-European Maori slave caste who has married above him and resents the fact. This will send the wrong message to people in other countries."

The good news: Water quality in the Mississippi River is improving. The surprise: Pollution is more concentrated in the upper part of the river than the lower reaches.

Mr. Barber said the team of scientists was trying to track the movement of chemicals along the river and needed a way to sort the domestic waste from industrial waste.

Knowing that will allow researchers to see if there are changes in these ratios in the future, which would indicate if anti-pollution projects are working.

Caffeine showed up in high concentrations near the Minneapolis-St. Paul area in Minnesota, around

the confluence of the Illinois River carrying the flow from Chicago and near cities such as St. Louis.

The water experts analyzed 450 samples of Mississippi River water collected in 1991 and 1992, seeking to measure the amounts of pollution in the river and its patterns of change over the seasons.

Mr. Barber said the team is going back this summer to take samples of river bed sediments. They want to compare the chemicals in the sediments now with those they found in 1992, to see what effect last summer's floods had.

In the earlier river water studies, they found 52 different organic compounds in the river, with at least some of the pollutants turning up in about one-quarter of the water samples.

However, significant concentrations were found in only three areas: Below the Minneapolis-St. Paul area; below the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi at

Cairo, Ill.; and between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, La. Mr. Barber said none of the chemicals detected was concentrated enough to be hazardous.

Most of the chemicals found in the river are byproducts of waste water discharge by cities, urban runoff, power plant cooling water discharge, pulp mill waste, feed lot runoff, river traffic, refueling spills and industrial discharge.

Frequently, it's thought that water quality decreases as you move down river, and there is some truth to that, but there is so much more water that chemical concentrations are very low," Mr. Barber said.

"People think New Orleans' water quality is low because of all the waste from up above, but the most susceptible part of river seems to be above St. Louis, where it's a relatively small river," Mr. Barber said. "It's no cliché that dilution is the solution."

Chasing city water? Follow the coffee

By Randolph E. Schmid
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON —

There's a good new way to track the flow of domestic waste into the nation's streams and rivers, scientists say: Follow the coffee cup.

It turns out caffeine does more than keep the scientists awake. The ingredient found in coffee, tea and cola is an excellent tracer of waste movement.

But he warned, "people will ask why, when Maori people have more than equal political rights, access to profitable education, pay and employment, they choose to alienate themselves into a racial underclass."

And he added: "I found absurd the cop-out excuse the film gives for (Jake's) viciousness — that you can expect no better from a descendant of the pre-European Maori slave caste who has married above

A matter of imagination

By Jean-Claude Elias

Extremes have always been attractive to me and when I think of a personal computer (PC) as a tool, I often compare it to a pen. Correlating a highly sophisticated product to an extremely simple one may seem exaggerated at first sight but it is not. Just like a pen can be used to write an infinite variety of words, sentences or texts, PCs also can be used in thousands of different applications.

The result, when using the same tool, depends highly on the user, his age, gender, occupation and personality. Just like a pen in the hand of a businessman, a poet or schoolboy will produce different texts, PCs will be used in many various ways by the above mentioned people.

Because of its inherent complexity however, a PC has the negative tendency to limit, restrict and sometimes even inhibit people's imagination and creativity. Very few users completely go past the learning process and feel comfortable enough with the machine to free themselves from technophobia and really benefit from all the system's possibilities.

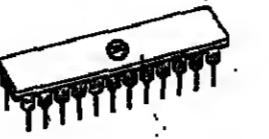
One practical way to live in harmony with PCs is to capitalise on the many available peripherals and accessories, often considered as luxury options. There is an incredible range of products that are much more fun to use and certainly more communicative than the standard monitor, the keyboard or even the printer.

The mouse, first introduced in the eighties with the famous but short-lived "Lisa" computer by Apple, remains the simplest and possibly the friendliest, most practical, most useful accessory.

In addition to the expensive, professional document scanners and optical disks that have often been discussed in this column, PC users can enjoy a wide array of other affordable additions.

Hand-held scanners, small colour printers, sound

chip talk



cards, MIDI music cards, TV-Video cards, fax cards and robotic arms, to name only a few, will add a touch of fantasy to your gloomy daily computing. With local prices ranging from 100 to 300 dinars they are worth every fils you would spend on them.

The main advantage is the window they can open for you in terms of new ideas and applications. Forget about word processing, spreadsheets, data bases and calculations. Forget even the boring computer games. Take a sound card, a video card and create a short film, a documentary or a cartoon. Get a robotic arm and programme it to shake hands, to serve coffee. Scan your family's, your friends' photographs and integrate them in the letters you would write them. In other words, move from passive to active.

Another, but slightly more expensive device lets you create images, graphics on the screen, and then obtain an output of the work on a slide, transparency or even a regular printed colour photograph, by attaching a camera to the PC. Standard software like Harvard Graphics offer such an option.

The world of personal computing is fascinating to explore. The above mentioned accessories and tools can tremendously help and contribute to expand one's imagination and enjoy the exploration.

Are private universities fancy dumps?

By E. Yaghi

First of all, this article does not pertain to those private universities that are administered by qualified personnel, but to the ones that lag way behind conventional standards. The most important requirement to be met by any president of a private university is to be well-qualified for the job that he fills. He must be competent at his job, have the required qualifications to carry out his duties and be on good terms with his staff in a more or less democratic atmosphere which follows suit with the democratic trends in Jordan. Deans who staff their various departments should not be hired merely to pay lip service to him and act as spies on the other professors who do not grovel to outlandish demands of their president. Such deans divide the teaching personnel into two camps, those who pay added lip service to their employer and those who speak out whenever they feel that the president is making unjust demands or unwise decisions.

It is only common sense therefore, that chairpersons of every department within the university should be people who have their own personalities and not ones who can never make decisions on their own, cannot think for themselves and who spend their time, to phrase it nicely, polishing apples for their superior, or listening to students' endless complaints about those professors who are not in the same shining camp that polishes the president's boots or apples. No actions should be made simply to ingratiate unreasonable demands without taking into consideration if those actions are right or wrong.

In some private universities, the president may have his doors open to students to hear their complaints, including those about professors who did not give them the grades they wished or perform the way they thought best. At the other end of the scale are the public universities which pay little heed to student complaints. There must be some happy meeting ground where not all trivial matters will be listened to against alleged offending professors nor places where students are never able to express their views and wishes.

It definitely is a problem and a concern for our country when private universities perform more like commercial companies than institutions of learning. Students must be given grades they deserve and have earned. Often, students in private universities demand that their marks never fall below 70 out of 100. This is all well and good if they put forth the effort and time to obtain these grades, but very detrimental if they think they deserve a certain average simply because their parents paid an exorbitant tuition. No university should cater to the whims of such students because this then undermines the whole system and value of the level of education offered at such institutions. All students are potential leaders of their tomorrows and no future should be built on a shaky foundation.

Also, presidents should never take sides against their teaching staff only to flatter students whom they wish to retain as precious customers and avoid offending them. Any professor has every right to defend himself and he should not be considered guilty until proven innocent, but innocent until proven guilty. Furthermore, professors should not be forced to attend lectures outside their own departments by visiting professors just to fill otherwise empty chairs in auditoriums. To attend or not to attend such lectures should be up to the discretion of

each and every professor who works at that particular university. Observations of visiting lecturers should be open to both students and teaching staff and only those wishing to be present should do so. It is a sign of hypocrisy to force professors to attend lectures they are not concerned with or interested in.

Also, no student should be allowed to enter classes one and a half months late at any university. This practice has been abused in some private universities, again, to comply with and please customers. Students are not customers, they are in institutions of learning to learn. How can any student miss a month and a half of lectures and then pretend to comprehend the subject he/she has missed so much off? In most public universities, no student is allowed to miss more than seven hours unless for medical reasons or a sudden death in the family. This is reasonable, for there is nothing students like more than to skip classes. Each lecture is valuable and is based on the previous lecture before it. Lectures are like building blocks and are structured upon each other. There are also some students who ask to spend three weeks outside Jordan to renew their residencies in certain Gulf countries. This procedure requires only spending one week not three away from lectures. Some students claim that their grandfathers or grandmothers died and also miss classes. No one bothers to investigate these claims to see if they are valid or not.

Sometimes professors are employed who are graduates of universities in the developing world. Of these, some can hardly read, write or speak English. One would imagine such graduates who attend universities in English to be somewhat fluent in that language, for how can such a graduate have grasped his subject if he is not able to read or speak his target language? Why does the Ministry of Higher Education only recognise 500 American universities when it is widely known that the United States has one of the best systems of education in the world? Is this because our standards are rusty and we follow antique codes of recognition, or are there other reasons?

Constant inspection should be made of all private universities to ensure that they maintain a specific standard.

Tests must be conducted that compare the students of private universities with those of public universities in the same departments to determine if students from private institutions maintain the same level as those at public ones. It would be most interesting to see which students have the better grades on such tests.

Again, this article is not against all private universities. Without mentioning names, some of these universities are administered by excellent presidents who perform great services to those establishments they are connected with. On the other hand, some private universities are disgraceful and make a bad reputation for the rest. A president of any university holds one of the greatest tasks of any job, for it is his duty to ensure that the institution he heads turns out students who have gained enough knowledge to enable them to provide for their future. No president should be a dictator of tyrannical. The professors he employs must neither pay lip service to his every command whether pragmatic or not, nor should they in turn esteem themselves as demi-gods over their students. There must be a joyful medium where the needs of students and teachers are met and respected regardless if the institution is private or public.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammed A. Shuaqir

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

- A young American boy designed a fingerless glove so as children could use it in playing baseball.
- The Food Museum at Vivi, a town in Switzerland, exhibits a monumental Pharaonic cake up of honey, sesame and milk. It dates back to 2200 B.C.
- A California expert produced a lamp that has the thickness of a man's hair.
- An American adorned his car with water taps.
- A bicycle built in 1898 could seat 10 people.
- It takes 7,000 grains of aspirin to make a pound (about 500 grams).

★ ★ ★ ★

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

- I hear you're going abroad!
Balghasim annaka massafra el kharif!
- That's right. I'm going to Canada.
Ha zaib. Emi massafra el Canada.
- Are you going there on a visit?
Hal zaib zaib fee zeyara el honak?
- Yes, I'll see my elder brother.
Na'am, sawfa ara akhil akher.
- Is he married?
Hal hawa mutazawwif?
- Yes, he is married to a Canadian lady.
Na'am, emaha mutazawwif besiyada Canadeya.
- Did they visit Jordan?
Hal zara' Al Ordoun?
- They visit Jordan once every two years.
Hama yara' Al Ordoun marratun koll sunzain.
- Do you like to travel?
Hal tabibbo as safar?
- Oh, yes! I like to meet people and see the world.
Na'am. Olib an okhil annas wa arakalam.
- Have you ever read anything about Canada?
Hal kara' tayy shay an Canada?
- I've read a lot about it: Its history, culture, ways of life, customs and traditions and many other things.
Lakd kara' to al-khatir asba: Tarikhaha, thaqafatoha, asaleehat hayat, al adat watakkaleed wa ashyia ukhra kathira.
- Do you speak English? Hal tatakkallam al-ingleza?
- Yes, I can speak and write English and French.
Na'am, astadi' an atakelam wa aktob al-ingleza wal-faransaya.
- How long are you going to stay there?
Mal-modda astadi taawi iqama ss'eeda.
- About three months.
Hawaii thalathet shohor.
- I wish you a happy stay.
Astidha laha iqama ss'eeda.
- Thank you very much.
Shukran jazeekum.

★ ★ ★ ★

AN INVITATION TO LAUGHTER

- ★ A man planned to have dinner with Joha's father. On his way to the house, he met Joha while playing with little children.
"Where's your father, Joha?" asked the man.
"First give me a morsel of bread and then I'll tell you his whereabouts," Joha said.

★ ★ ★ ★

- ★ One day Joha entered an orchard. His dress was attached to a tree branch. Addressing the branch, Joha said: "Unless you were a beast, I'd break your neck!"

★ ★ ★ ★

- ★ Once Joha lost his donkey and went to look for it saying to himself: "Thanks be to Allah".
When asked why he said so, he promptly answered: "I thanked God because if I had been riding it, I'd have been lost with it!"

★ ★ ★ ★

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. How many legs does a spider have?
2. What does HB on a pencil mean?
3. What is the most commonly used letter of the alphabet?
4. What are the seven colours of the rainbow?
5. What is a belcher?
6. Of which country is AVIACO the national airline?
7. Who coined the term "RED TAPE"?
8. Who first described Herodotus as "the father of history"?

★ ★ ★ ★

YOUR DREAMS INTERPRETED

COLLISION: This dream predicts that you'd better take positive action in regard to making a decision. If you don't trust your own judgement, seek friendly (or professional) advice but stop dithering.

ECLIPSE: A very unusual dream probably arising from a subconscious worry concerning your health or that of someone close to you. In either case a medical checkup would be helpful.

★ ★ ★ ★

PUZZLES

(A) There is a frog at the bottom of a well. The well is 10 metres deep. Each day the frog jumps up three metres and then slips back two metres. When will the frog reach the top of the well at that rate?

★ ★ ★ ★

(B) The middle THREE LETTERS of these five-letter words form short words themselves. But what are the five-letter words?

1	P	E	A	
2	W	A	N	
3	T	E	A	
4	E	A	R	
5	C	A	R	
6	R	U	N	
7	L	O	P	
8	T	I	N	
9	R	I	P	
10	C	O	P	

- 1- An ancient throwing weapon.
- 2- To show off.
- 3- The vapour from boiling water.
- 4- A precious stone.
- 5- To frighten.
- 6- The chief strain.
- 7- To run away secretly with a lover.
- 8- To smell badly.
- 9- Rubbish; also lining of a cow's stomach.
- 10- Opportunity; the range of action.

Thursday, May 12

8:30 Bony

Under The Influence
Bony investigates a series of murders that take place in a winery, which has been in the same family for five generations.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — The Bastion

Starring: Robert Vaughn, Michael Blakemore, John Wood
The historical events following the German entry into Poland in 1939, which was followed by Britain and Australia entering the war... We also witness General MacArthur's arrival in Australia to lead the allied forces against the Japanese.

Friday, May 13

9:10 Scene Of The Crime

Stalk Radio
A radio announcer's foul language and aggressive behaviour on air, not only invites high ratings to the station, but threatening letters as well.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Middlemarch

11:10 Threes' Company
Lies, My Roommate Told Me

Saturday, May 14

8:30 The Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air

10:00 News In English

10:20 Moon Over Miami

Clubba Hubba

William presents himself to a girl as an aristocrat, from the jet set. But it turns out that what she likes in him is his real self.

9:00 One To One

A local interview programme hosted by Dr. Ziad Rifa'i.

9:30 The Campbells

Eyes Of Angels
James steps in at the right moment to save two blacks from an imminent death at the hands of a racist.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — The Last Bastion

Starring: Robert Vaughn, Michael Blakemore, John Wood

Sunday, May 15

8:30 You Bet Your Life

Bill Cosby hosts this very funny and entertaining quiz show.

9:10 Stolen Lives

On her death bed, the maid reveals the secret of the baby girl to the ignorant father. Evelyn has to face the consequences of lying.

10:00 News In English

10:20 The Black Powder

11:10 Top Cops

Tape To Tape Master

Heroic police work involving a bank robbery in New York, a woman killer in Florida, and the arrests and later killing of Lee Harvey Oswald in 1963.

Tuesday, May 17

8:30 Step By Step

The Paper Chase

Despite down year, Disneyland still makes magic, money

By E. Scott Reckard

The Associated Press
ANAHEIM, Calif. — The earthquake toppled attendance. A proposed theme park next door was put on hold. The "space-age" polyester uniforms worn by Tomorrowland people movers and attendants look more like "Star Trek" rejects.

Disneyland, the middle-aged progenitor of Walt Disney Co.'s amusement park empire, has seen better days.

Yet it remains a remarkably reliable money maker, particularly in contrast to Euro-Disney's debacle of \$390 million in losses last year.

Though the park keeps figures private, attendance appears to have tumbled by 15 per cent to 20 per cent following the Jan. 17 Northridge earthquake, Seidler Cos. analyst Jeffrey Logsdon said. He cited the "four horsemen" that have hit southern California — fire, floods, riots and earthquakes.

Those attitudes to

sions here and in Japan, and the March slayings of two Japanese exchange students in Los Angeles. The killings left tourist officials in Anaheim and the rest of Orange County struggling to distance themselves and their \$4.8 billion industry from their urban neighbour.

But before writing Disneyland off consider Kathy and Gordon Flock, honeymooners who had heard attendance was down but wound up in a park jammed with crowds on Good Friday.

There the Pocatello, Idaho, couple waited for the Space Mountain ride in a line stretching far past the "45 minutes from this point."

"Just put your mind on autopilot and before you know it you're there," he said.

"We've got earthquakes just as big in Idaho," said she. "You just don't hear about them because there aren't as many people to get shook up."

That would put it at 10.8 million, down from 12 million during fiscal 1993, the

make Mickey smile. "We've had a great spring break," said a hopeful Disneyland spokesman, Lindsay Schnebley. "We have continued to rebound toward the pre-quake level."

Amusement Business Magazine put 1993 Disneyland attendance at 11.4 million, down slightly but still second among U.S. theme parks.

Only Disney's Magic Kingdom in Florida's Walt Disney world attracted more, with 12 million. (Disney's other Florida parks, Epcot Centre and Disney-MGM Studios, were Nos. 3 and 4 with 10 million and 8 million visitors respectively.)

But times are tough. In an enthusiastic overall report on Disney, Natwest Securities analysts Paul C. Marsh and Vincent Colicchio predicted recently that attendance would decline 10 per cent in the fiscal year ending Sept. 30.

That would put it at 10.8 million, down from 12 million during fiscal 1993, the

analysts said.

Meanwhile, Disney deals with bankers over Euro-Disney's huge debt, with the Japanese over a new ocean-theme park beside Tokyo Disneyland, with critics in Virginia over a new American history theme park and with its own plans for a fourth park in Florida and search for a new park site in the Far East.

All this began when Disney opened in 1955,

known to the entertainment world as "Walt Disney's folly." With a heavy bank debt dating from at least Snow White, Disney had a tough time financing the park, which opened at a cost of \$17 million.

Despite help from many companies that "sponsored" park areas, Walt Disney only got it open by borrowing against his life insurance and going into partnership with ABC-TV. ABC at the time was very much the stepchild third network, seeking prestige and anything to bolster programming.



Euro-Disney has faced the debacle of \$390 million in losses last year

Indian video war hits world's biggest film industry

By Moses Manoharan

Reuter

BOMBAY — A bitter dispute between producers of Bombay films and their distributors over the timing of the release of video copies flared recently and threatened to paralyse the world's biggest film industry.

Producers slapped a ban on new releases after refusing to agree to a demand of the distributors to implement a three-month delay between the release of a film and its video.

It has sharply divided the film industry in Bombay, as producers, their financiers,

distributors, cable operators and cinema owners began assessing their losses from the standstill.

Some 700 films are made every year by the Indian film industry, which is concentrated in the western city of Bombay, the country's commercial capital, and in Madras in the south.

"This is a typical case of cutting your nose to spite your face," said N.N. Sippy, who is vice-president of the Film Distributors Council (FDC), whose members buy the rights to exhibit films in designated areas.

"Let us now wait and watch how long it takes before they decide what films are made to be released," Mr. Sippy said in an interview.

The FDC has accused the Film Makers Combine (FMC), which represents the producers, of breaking an agreement they signed in 1993 to delay the video releases by three months to allow the distributors to secure their profits from cinema earnings.

The FMC says it is under heavy pressure from the powerful cable operators lobby, which wields enormous clout as the new financiers of the movie industry in an economy that is swiftly opening up under a reform programme launched three years ago.

The reforms are driving out much of the black or unaccounted money from

businessmen and criminals that had traditionally funded Indian movie-making, analysts believe.

The analysts say the new financiers buy video rights to a movie for between two and five million rupees (\$64,000-\$160,000) which is around 20 per cent of the total cost of a movie, but it is usually these funds that are used to start the film.

The distributors fear that if a movie flops at the box office, it will be a total loss for them after three months when they get to release their version for the cable networks.

But producer Yash Chopra counters: "In a free market economy people are

free to trade the way they want to. You can't impose laws."

"It is the producer who decides when and how to sell his product and nobody can dictate terms to him."

FMC General Secretary K.D. Shorey says one solution would be to allow video cassettes strictly for private home-viewing and force cable operators to observe the three-month delay in showing the films on a mass scale through their networks.

Heavy fines and jail terms for violations of the three-month delay would force cable operators to toe the line, he said.

Both the distributors and producers feel they can sur-

vive the battle of attrition.

The distributors say they will run old films in the cinema they had booked for the new releases, while the producers hope to get the FMC to compensate their losses from the ban. One producer released six films just ahead of the ban to beat the deadline.

The only ones who admit they will suffer losses are those who purchased the video rights to the new films that would have been released if the ban had not been enforced.

They say huge amounts have already been spent by them on publicity for films to be released in the second half of May.

Galliera Fashion Museum fetes 15 years

By Suzy Patterson

The Associated Press

PARIS — From intricate 18th-century fans to wild-eyed 20th-century creations, the Palais Galliera Fashion Museum is celebrating its 15 years with a low-keyed retrospective exhibition.

"We want to show what a fashion museum should be all about," says Catherine Join-Dieterle, director of what is formally known as the Musee De La Mode Et Du Costume.

What are children's 1930 satin confirmation costumes doing alongside a bathing robe by Poiret? The social history is not quite clear, but all the costumes and outfits shown in the "memoires de mode" exhibition are beautifully preserved.

"Since we recently

moved much storage space and restoration to other parts of town, we've wanted to do a retrospective of our activities and directions," Ms. Join-Dieterle said at the opening of the show that lasts until Aug. 21.

The elegant palace, commissioned by the Duchess of Galliera in the late 19th century, was built on plans by the Gustave Eiffel Agency. Following litigation between Paris and the Italian-born duchess, the palace became city property at the turn of the century.

This exhibition is more eclectic and somewhat eccentric. It begins not with history, but with the avant-garde, to place contemporaries in the forefront, the show's organisers say.

Thus visitors are treated to some of today's weirder objects of fashion creation: A scotch-tape-belted, rehabilitated ancient theatre costume by Martin Margiela, with silver Japanese socks-shoes; some cartoon-painted outfits by Jean-Charles De Castelbajac, or a salmon velvet gown by

Jean-Paul Gaultier featuring his signature stiffened cornucopia bosoms.

More familiar in the true couture line are outfit by Yves Saint Laurent, Christian Lacroix, Hanae Mori and Guy Laroche.

Works of several top couturiers are conspicuously absent. "We could not show everyone," said museum spokesman Jean-Francois Vaunier. "This is focused on aspects of fashion and society."

After Modern Fashions is a fascinating melange: A combination of historical clothes and accessories from 1850 to 1945. Just near a group of fabulous 19th-century lace-edged taffeta and satin bridal gowns is a severe Red Cross uniform from World War I — perhaps a warning of things to come.

In between, pop up an elaborately decorated loose flapper-style dress by Paul Poiret and a straight beach robe with a wonderful pastel-toned print by Raoul Dufy — totally lovely in a beachcomber way, with shells, waves, sails.

"Things have changed, haven't they?" remarked an older woman admiring the modesty of this below-the-knee beach coat created by Molyneux in 1922.

"I shocked my parents by wanting one of these Tintin knickers outfit," famed coiffeur Alexandre said at the Galiera opening, recalling the fashionable 1935 tweed knicker suit of cartoon character Tintin. "I finally got it, in tones of

blue and green," he said.

Accessories are a big part of this show, and dozens of fans and elaborate parasols are displayed for those who like detail.

Shoes from the 1940s were elaborately platformed, much more ornamented than anything recent. A 1939 Schiaparelli bag shows the designer's futuristic idea of battery-powered lights inside the purse to help find keys.

The show also reverts to more ancient history. A fashion victim of 1887 is suited up in a recycled jacket of Louis XVI, beheaded in 1793. The 18th-century gilded details and cut of the original jacket are subjected to the 1887 fad of a bustled bustle-backs, lending a hump to sartorial history.

Vivienne Westwood, Christian Lacroix and others are behind grotesque bustle revivals, showing that designers will keep inventing, and victims will keep on wearing their creations.

Canadian rocker Colin James goes bluesy with Little Big Band

By David Germain
The Associated Press
CANADIAN blues-rocker Colin James has put a stamp of authenticity on his claim that he's not just another pretty boy popster in the Bryan Adams mold.

When he went into the studio last year to record his third album for Virgin Records, James said, he decided to answer the burning questions of critics, "Is he pop or is he blues? Is he trying to be Bryan Adams or Stevie Ray Vaughan?"

The answer is clear on "Colin James And The Little Big Band," a swinging and soulful, brash and brassy collection of blues and nothing but.

"What I heard about the last two records was a lot of people saying, 'Well, he

talks about the blues a lot, but where's the blues?'" James, 29, said in a telephone interview from his home in Vancouver. "I kind of got sick of that."

For Little Big Band, James mined the repertoire of his early days in Canada as a blues journeyman and came up with a dozen jazzy jump-blues tunes from the late 1940s and early '50s.

While the songs aren't quite obscure, neither are they blues standards. The album opens with a thunderous version of Roy Brown's "Cadillac Baby," gets snaky with an extended cut of Johnny "Guitar" Watson's "Three Hours Past Midnight" and barrels through "Cal Valentine's Boogie Twist Part II."

Besides a funky original

James carefully avoids putting himself in the role of blues-guitar successor to Vaughan.

"I never look at people as successors to other people. People's shoes are their shoes," James said. "I know what I loved about Stevie's playing, and I'm sure Stevie would have enjoyed this record."

James grew up on the lonesome prairies of Saskatchewan and started playing guitar at 13. Early on, he played traditional Celtic music (popular among the folk crowd in Canada) and in his midteens toured the prairies with a ragtag band called Sod Hut and the Buffalo Chips, a "silly name for a bunch of people with way too many bongo players," James said.

He quit school at 16, moved to Winnipeg and abandoned the Celtic music to take up blues. A friend in Vancouver introduced him to a lot of the songs James covers on Little Big Band.

James performed on streets and in subways from Vancouver to Montreal. Gradually, through concerts across Canada, James built up a blues following that helped him earn a recording contract with Virgin in Canada.

His first two albums, though, were mainly pop-rock, prompting comparisons to fellow Canadian Adams. While talking over his next album with producer Chris Kimsey, James taped a tape of a Big Band concert he'd done eight years earlier "in a rented white

tuxedo tucked into his cowboy boots."

Kismey liked the younger James' bluesy sound. Two weeks later, they were in the studio, backed by the horn section from roomful of blues, ex-Vaughan keyboard player Reese Wynans and pianist Chuck Leavell, who played with the Rolling Stones and the Allman Brothers.

They recorded the album in a week and a half. James normally spends two months on an album.

Playing "Three Hours Past Midnight" wasn't even on James' playlist until somebody called out the title in the studio.

"I said, 'OK.' Chuck

Leavell started playing the intro, and that was the end of it. We all just started

playing," James said. "On a song like 'Three Hours Past Midnight,' I could solo on it till the cows come home. I didn't even know the one we used would be a keeper take. I wanted to do the guitar solo again, but Chris wouldn't let me.

"That's what the blues is, an expression of the moment," James said.

Released in Canada last fall, Little Big Band has sold 100,000 copies there. It was released in late February in the United States.

"We don't have ridiculously high hopes for the album around the world," said Doug Chappell, president of Virgin in Canada. "Medium sales would be fine as long as the album adds more credibility to Colin's resume."

James expects to be at work in the studio on his fourth album, another rock record, this spring. His first two albums sold a combined 450,000 in Canada, about four times their U.S. sales.

He knows his U.S. breakthrough is more likely to come from one of his mainstream rock albums rather than Little Big Band. Yet the blues album has kept him from getting stamped in the popster mold and may have opened doors on some other nonpop projects.

"This may allow me to do some fringe albums here and there, to have some fun in between rock albums," James said. "Maybe a delta album, maybe a Gospel one. There's an enjoyable lack of stress in having that choice."

Jordan, PLO agree on mechanisms for accord

(Continued from page 1)

The details of the mechanism Jordan and the PLO agreed upon are expected to be formalized in a document signed today by the two leaders after consultations with their respective leaderships. The signing is expected to be followed by a press conference at a joint statement will be issued, officials said.

No further details were immediately available. Questions were raised on the nature of the Jan. 7 accord after the PLO signed the agreement in Paris, detailing a range of specific measures and ones which appeared to nar-

row down the PLO's options in dealing with Jordan in various spheres.

At the same time, the Paris accord also gave the Palestinians some symbols of statehood during the five-year interim Palestinian rule envisaged in the occupied territories under the Sept. 13 Israel-PLO agreement.

Those symbols, highly cherished by the Palestinians after 27 years of occupation, had not appeared in the cards when Jordan and the PLO signed their economic agreement in January. And hence the questions over its implementation and the PLO's intentions.

Dr. Anani said the PLO side had responded in a "high spirit

Israel: Handover on May 18

(Continued from page 1)

... of the Gaza Strip ... and who will be in the hands of Palestinians and the scrapping of the agreement between Mr. Sarid said.

The agreement, signed in Paris by Mr. Rabin and PLO chairman Yasser Arafat last week, provides for Israeli troops to remain in certain areas to guard Israeli settlements.

A parliamentary vote is not required by law, but it is customary for such an important agreement. Also, one source said the vote will likely strengthen Mr. Rabin's political hand as approved by more than 90 percent of the public.

Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu warned legislators the accord undermined civil security, and he questioned its credibility.

The prime minister made clear in his speech the PLO's security stems from belief in Arab's promise," Mr. Netanyahu said. "I who believes this man in world ... every sane person knows he can, not be lied."

Mr. Rabin told parliament the self-rule deal was the possible to ensure Israel's security needs. No accord is perfect, but considering the circumstances

of cooperation and understanding" to the points raised by the Jordanian side.

"It was not enough to agree on the basic principles," Dr. Anani said. "It was necessary that we work out practical steps on the ground so that technical experts and specialists could start work on implementing the agreement."

Describing Jordanian-Palestinian interests as interrelated, Dr. Anani said things had to be "organized in a detailed way so that people and the business sector could take advantage of the chances available on the ground in view of what is going on in the Palestinian ground."

Scuds kill 25

(Continued from page 1)

President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan on the latest developments in Yemen. He said Aden welcomed an UAE offer to resume mediation.

Jordan, Oman, Egypt and the UAE, tried to broker a settlement to end Yemen's protracted political crisis before it erupted into an all-out civil war last week.

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) said it would send mediation mission to Yemen to urge the country's leaders to end the fighting.

Meanwhile, the exiled former president of South Yemen, Ali Nasser Mohammad, said he had met a northern envoy in Damascus Monday and urged both sides to "return to dialogue, the only way out of the crisis."

Mr. Nasser Mohammad was ousted from Aden in a bloody power struggle in 1986.

Radio stations in the rival strongholds broadcast conflicting claims and accusations of brutality.

Sanaa Radio said northern troops had shot down three southern warplanes and claimed southern forces shelling a hospital in Al Rahidah, just north of the old southern border and 75 kilometres northwest of Aden.

O reformists gain strength ahead of self-rule

(Continued from page 1)

... who...

FIDA officials, however, said Mr. Abd Rabbo was ready to take part in the Palestinian authority proposed. Mr. Arafat accepted nearly defined terms and democratic basis for the functions of the authority.

According to FIDA, the immediate task is to work on freezing the Palestinian authority from the constraints imposed on it by the agreement. According to the agreement, the Palestinian authority cannot take major major decisions without consulting the PLO chairman.

In a lengthy memo to the PLO chairman, Dr. Erakat wrote that the pact aimed at perpetuating, instead of ending, the occupation.

Mr. Arafat was not able to secure full-fledged support for the accord by his own PLO Executive Committee or the Fatah Central Committee.

At a meeting in Tunis on May, Mr. Arafat was said to have not even sought the approval of his colleagues as the issue was presented as a fait accompli.

PLO Executive Committee member Mohammad Zuhdi Nashashibi was particularly outraged by the terms of the economic agreement signed in Paris on April 29.

In an internal memo to the PLO Executive Committee, made available to the Jordan Times, Mr. Nashashibi said that the Paris pact allowed Israel total control over the Palestinian economy through the joint Palestinian-Israeli economic committee. In Mr. Nashashibi's view, by allowing Israel to share, if not to control, economic decision-

making, the pact will obstruct the building of a Palestinian national economy.

Mr. Nashashibi is said to have declined membership in the Palestinian authority.

A senior Fatah Central Committee member, Hani Al Hassan, believes that the Paris economic accord is the most dangerous part of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement.

Mr. Hassan, and his brother, Khaled, who is currently under medical treatment at the Farah centre of the Al Hussein Medical City, are both against the accord and refuse to move to Jericho and Gaza under its terms.

So far Mr. Arafat has failed in talking any of the founders of his Fatah movement to join the authority, as head of the PLO Political Department Farouk Kaddoumi has already refused to be part of the new authority.

The only exception could be Intissar Al Wazir, widow of PLO military leader Khalil Al Wazir, Abu Jihad, who has reluctantly accepted her appointment to the authority.

But if most PLO leaders are mainly reacting to being excluded from the negotiations process, resulting in an agreement they were not party to, Mr. Arafat is not having an easier time with two of his closest partners that continued with the deal all the way through the signing. PLO Executive Committee members Mahmoud Abbas and economic chief Ahmad Qureia.

Both are said to have declined invitations to join the Palestinian authority citing differences with Mr. Arafat over the handling of the Palestine Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR).

Analysts and PLO officials, however, believe that Mr. Arafat will eventually succeed in forming a Palestinian authority. But they say the body will not be a strong one if it fails to recruit credible names with broad following in the occupied territories, especially after losing the support of important leaders like the estranged chief Palestinian negotiator Haidar Abdul Shafi.

But many, including opponents of the peace pact, now argue that the only way to contain the damage and to open the way for the emergence of strong nationalist leaders is to ensure that free elections will be held after the setting up of the Palestinian autonomy.

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UNLEASHING THE WINDS OF CHANGE: Thousands of Albanians take part in demonstrations in 1991 before toppling the Communist government that isolated the nation from the rest of the world (File photo)

U.S. courts Albania and some of its neighbours

"Five decades of Stalinist nightmare left Albania's 3 million people struggling to

overcome isolation, neglect and a degree of poverty unmatched in Europe. During most

of that period, their xenophobic leaders made the United States the chief enemy."

By George Jahn
The Associated Press

GJADER, Albania — To peasants working the fields near Gjader air base, the sleek, silent U.S. drone aircraft spying on Serbia and Bosnia could have been from outer space.

"They bad white, cylindrical bodies, long wings and long, downward-pointing tail fins," Pellumb Eleshi said, with awe in his voice. "They flew north, toward Serbia, but oh, so silently we never saw anything like them."

What might sound like a myth told by villagers rooted in the 19th century is fact. U.S. and Albanian sources confirm that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) used Gjader for nearly two months this year to fly unmanned spy missions over Serbia and Bosnia. U.S. planes under NATO command have struck three times this year at Bosnian Serb targets.

Five decades of Stalinist nightmare left Albania's 3 million people struggling to overcome isolation, neglect and a degree of poverty unmatched in Europe. During most of that period, their xenophobic leaders made the United States the chief enemy.

Now, this mountainous nation of decaying cities haphazardly connected by crumbling roads is being kissed awake by the world's most powerful suitor. The Bosnian war and longer-term strategic interests are leading Washington to court Albania and some of its neighbours.

Important as the mission was, Albania could become even more vital to Washington.

Russia and the United States are coordinating policy in former Yugoslavia, with the Russians working on their Slavic kin, the Serbs. But possible Russian expansionism is a long-term worry.

Bob Norman, the U.S. diplomatic representative in neighbouring Macedonia, spoke to the Associated Press

of hopes for an "east-west corridor" across the southern Balkans linking Turkey and Bulgaria to Albania, with outlets on the Adriatic.

In the long term, that could lessen the region's dependence on ports in Greece, where rising nationalism and pro-Serb sympathies have led to worsening relations with some neighbours.

Such plans presuppose political influence. They also require time and money.

On the mountain highway that snakes northeast from Tirana toward the Serbian border, a white-knuckled drive of 200 km takes more than eight hours over remnants of pavement originally laid by Communist youth brigades in 1947. Railroads and the telephone system are in no better shape, and no Albanian port can take a container ship.

Washington is interested all the same, although the Pentagon denies immediate plans to create a military base in Albania. One diplomat said he knew of U.S. plans for a \$120 million rail project to link Macedonia and Bulgaria.

Interior Minister Ljubomir Frchkovski of Macedonia spoke of "significant" American presence in his country, beyond the more than 500 U.S. soldiers on U.N. duty as a signal to Serbia to stay out.

Hunting at U.S. intelligence

activities, he said: "I'm sure you'll understand if I don't go into details."

In Albania, obvious signs include American village, 11 duplexes built two months ago in an eastern Tirana suburb free of the capital's otherwise endemic garbage and squalor.

The houses, fenced off and under guard, have a look of permanence. Spiro Martopulo, chief engineer on the project, said nine more were planned, which "tells me more Americans are coming here."

High-ranking American visitors in the past six months have included Gen. John Shalikashvili, now U.S. chief of staff, and his successor as supreme commander of NATO, Gen. George Joulwan.

Although the U.S. military team advising the Albanians consists of only three men, people in U.S. military uniforms are a common sight at sidewalk cafes in American village.

As Mt. Eleshi, the peasant, was telling of the spy flights, a helicopter brought the latest important U.S. guest, Gen. Robert C. Oaks, chief of the U.S. air force in Europe.

U.S. Ambassador William Ryerson often sits in on Albanian government meetings and is frequently in the welcoming party for foreign guests.

In the volatile Balkans, Albanians are mindful they need such strong friends.

Human rights organisations have accused Serbs of persecuting nearly 2 million ethnic Albanians under its rule in Kosovo Province. To the east of Albania is Macedonia, with its own large, increasingly radicalised Albanian minority. There are ethnic, territorial and border disputes with Greece to the south.

Uprisings of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia could set off a new Balkan war, and the Americans are urging the government to encourage moderation on their cross-border brethren. This angers those who agitate for the annexation of Kosovo and western Macedonia into a "greater Albania" of 7 million people.

"As an Albanian, I cannot be pleased if they want to lessen Balkan tensions through interference," Abdi Baleta, a prominent nationalist, is of the U.S. influence.

Most Albanians seem to welcome the Americans as insulation from a hostile Balkan environment.

Even Luan Hajdaraga, whose Socialist Party was formed from the remnants of the old Stalinist regime, says Albania needs the CIA to help rebuild its intelligence apparatus.

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African bank jamboree soured by funding row

NAIROBI (R) — The annual meeting of the African Development Bank (AFDB) opened under a cloud Wednesday after bank officials and rich Western states failed to agree on new aid for the continent's poorest countries.

The donors are refusing to replenish the bank's soft loan arm, the African Development Fund, until the African countries that control two-thirds of the bank's voting rights agree to a radical overhaul of how the bank operates.

AFDB President Babacar Ndiaye told the meeting in his opening speech that the discussions over the fund had been "engaging and productive."

That belied five days of fruitless talks here so far this week, including a meeting that went on until 0300 local time Wednesday morning, and off-

cials in both camps are pessimistic about the chances of a successful conclusion in Nairobi.

Sources said the donor countries had tabled a resolution calling for specific reforms to be implemented according to a fixed timetable, and would only agree to the replenishment of the fund if the annual meeting passed the resolution.

One African official called this "typical Western arrogance."

"It's like a doctor saying to his patient, I want you to recover quickly, but then goes on to deny the patient the necessary drugs to heal the ailment," he said.

One European delegate said his country's delegates were making tentative plans to stay on this weekend, after the three-day annual meeting

ends, to continue the fund talks.

Even then, the AFDB, which runs the fund jointly with the donors, stands no chance of getting the \$4 to \$5 million it originally aimed for.

Donors are pleading budgetary problems back home, and the most that is likely to be put on the table is \$2.8 billion, according to one European source.

"The bank will be lucky to set \$2 billion in fresh funding," another donor source said.

The row over the fund has overshadowed what should have been a week of celebration for the bank, not just because it has reached its thirtieth birthday, but because of the transition to majority black rule in South Africa.

Mr. Ndiaye echoed the sentiments of many delegates when he said Africa was entering "a truly historical period" with Tuesday's inauguration of President Nelson Mandela.

But he also warned that the bank would need even more money to help the new South Africa.

"We look forward to contributing significantly to economic development in South Africa and to enhancing its links with the rest of the continent, for the benefit of all peoples. Clearly this will require the bank being appropriately strengthened," Mr. Ndiaye said.

That, AFDB officials said, was a reminder to both African and non-African shareholders that the bank wanted a capital increase by 1997.

The Western members are again likely to insist on Mr. Ndiaye running a tighter ship if he wants more money.

They want action on an independent report which said the bank had stressed quantity above quality in its lending, and which found an atmosphere of distrust and uncertainty at the bank's headquarters in Abidjan.

They also want the bank to chase up those countries that have run up arrears on loan payments of more than \$700 million.

Mr. Ndiaye agreed that urgent action was required on this.

"If regional member countries do not resolve to contain their arrears, they risk endangering their own bank's strong standing in international capital markets," he said.



Dealers are busy trading during the Wednesday morning session at a foreign money brokerage in Tokyo. The U.S. dollar ended the session at 104.43 yen, jumping 1.25 yen from the previous day finish (AFP photo)

Bundesbank cuts key interest rates

FRANKFURT (AP) — The Bundesbank decided Wednesday to cut its discount rate from five per cent to 4.5 per cent and its Lombard rate from 6.5 to six per cent, a spokesman said after the bank's fortnightly central council meeting.

The new rates are effective Friday.

The German central bank last cut its base rates on April 14, when the reduction in both key rates was a quarter of a percentage point.

"This decision takes into account the fact that prospects for (monetary) stability in Germany have improved," the Bundesbank said in a communiqué.

Inflation was running at an annualised 3.1 per cent in April for western Germany, against 3.2 per cent in March and 3.4 per cent in February, according to definitive figures published Tuesday.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY MAY 12, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation
GENERAL TENDENCIES: You need to be careful that you are not too fixed and determined in your viewpoints today and tonight or you could encounter more trouble than you bargained for. Sidestep a troubleshooter.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Go to the right sources for information you need. Take time to visit with friends and relieve tensions you are under to get everything accomplished.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 18) You may find it difficult to handle monetary affairs early in the day but later they work out for you in your favour. Be wise to any situation.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 18) Radical changes may be required to gain your most cherished aims at this time. Be sure to improve your appearance especially to those you meet.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Make a deep study of what is really important in your life and then go after your aims in a positive and forthright manner.

LEO: (July 22 to August 19) Friends cannot be of much help to you during the day, but can be relied upon in the evening. Much pleasure is yours tonight with loved ones.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21) Follow rule and regularity.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 18) Express your fine ability when called upon to do so today and please higher-ups. Come to a fine accord with associates you are around.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY MAY 13, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation
GENERAL TENDENCIES: This Friday the thirteenth is well expected so don't expect too much to go away and don't put off until later any activity that is concerned with improving your welfare.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Study your position with friends and strive to improve the relationships you have with them. Show that you have poise. Be wary of outsiders.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 18) Conditions in the business world may appear strange now, but later can turn to your benefit. Be more self-assured in your actions today.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 18) Don't rush into a new interest before making a careful study. Take no risks with your reputation at this time which could be disastrous.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Take steps to improve the relationship with loved ones. A new contact can bring many benefits your way which will be positive.

LEO: (July 22 to August 19) Resolve a problem you have with an associate and cement better relations with this person for the future. Be wary of newcomers.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21) Be sure to finish regular routines before engaging in amusements. An argument with

a friend is not serious, so forget it and carry on.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Don't try to be forceful with others, or you could regret it later. Don't neglect a worthy friend of long standing you truly respect.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Be sure to keep promises made to family members. A new project needs more study before going ahead with it so take whatever time is necessary.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Be more objective in dealing with others and get better results. Use extreme caution in motion and avoid possible accidents which could result.

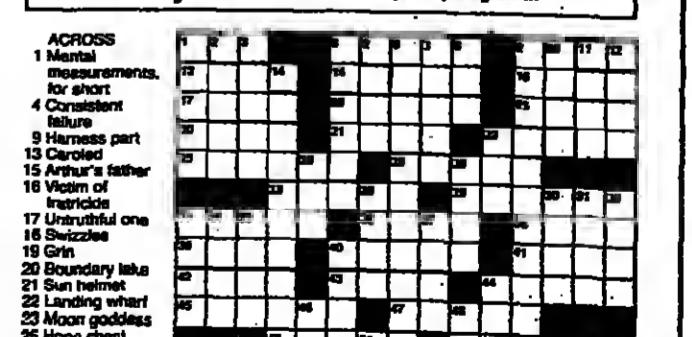
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Plan how to save more money instead of spending more than you can afford. Show others you have wisdom to handle any situation which comes along.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A time to be calm and serene while going after a personal aim. Be sure to use your money wisely at all times today and there will be some for later.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 18) New interests are good for you now, so delve into them without delay. Quietly get things done in a sure and positive manner.

THE Daily Crossword

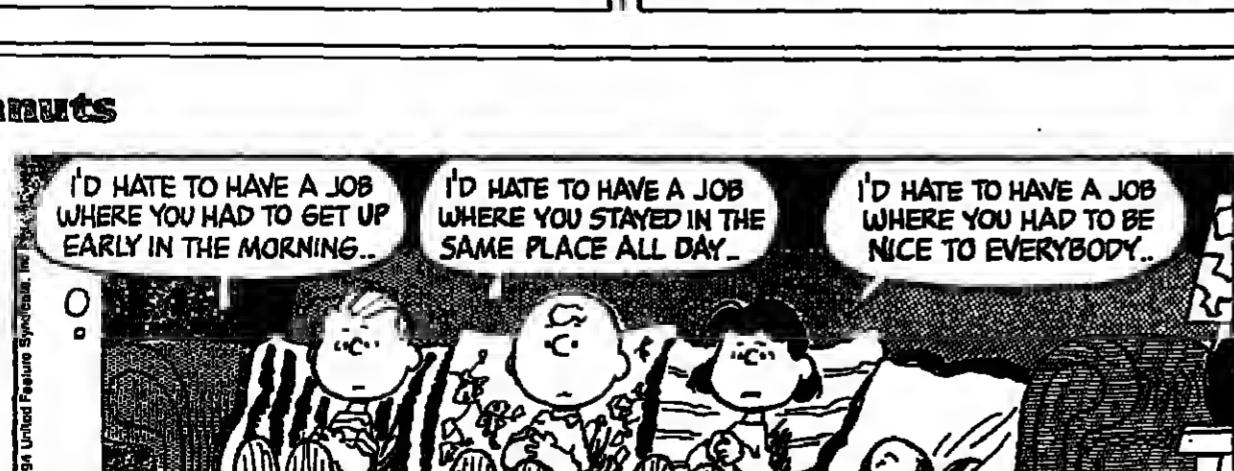
by Betty Jorgensen



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

1 Mental requirements, for short	2 Corset	3 Whirlwind	4 Shakes up	5 Negative prefix	6 Where to buy	7 Onomatopoeia	8 Freight carrier, abbr.	9 Where to buy	10 Substances	11 Abounding in trees	12 Shakes up	13 Shakes up	14 Where to buy	15 Shakes up	16 Shakes up	17 Shakes up	18 Shakes up	19 Shakes up	20 Shakes up	21 Shakes up	22 Shakes up	23 Shakes up	24 Shakes up	25 Active one	26 Walked on	27 Nautical word	28 Fir north pty	29 Coarse rice	30 Belora	31 Representa., lives	32 La —, Milan	33 Venetian town	34 Biographer	35 Ludwig	36 Dene	37 Jameson	38 Endures	39 Sheen	40 Miser	41 Preminger	42 Representa., lives	43 Cat-o-nine-tails	44 Power org.
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Peanuts



Mutt 'n' Jeff



1 Solly, e.g.	2 Capitalization	3 Sheep	4 Sheep	5 Sheep	6 Sheep	7 Sheep	8 Sheep	9 Sheep	10 Sheep	11 Sheep	12 Sheep	13 Sheep	14 Sheep	15 Sheep	16 Sheep	17 Sheep	18 Sheep	19 Sheep	20 Sheep	21 Sheep	22 Sheep	23 Sheep	24 Sheep	25 Sheep	26 Sheep	27 Sheep	28 Sheep	29 Sheep	30 Sheep	31 Sheep	32 Sheep	33 Sheep	34 Sheep	35 Sheep	36 Sheep	37 Sheep	38 Sheep	39 Sheep	40 Sheep

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Economy

JORDAN TIMES, THURSDAY-FRIDAY, MAY 12-13, 1994 7

JORDAN FINANCIAL REPORT					
MONDAY 15 MAY 1994 - TUESDAY 16 MAY 1994					
ORGANIC LTD MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR JORDANIA 11/5/1994					
CURRENCY & BANK					
	TRADED PRV.	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE	PRICE	PRICE
ARAB BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN AGRICULTURAL BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN EAST INVESTMENT BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN TRADING BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN FRENCH BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN FINANCIAL BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN FRANCIS BANK	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN TRADITION & CO. COMPLEX	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN ESTATE INVESTMENT	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN CIVIL REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN HOTEL EQUIP. RESTAURANT & ENTERTAINMENT	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN PETROLEUM & Fertilizers	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN PLASTIC & MANUFACTURING	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN PIPELINES INDUSTRIES	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN GLASS INDUSTRIES	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN ALUMINUM & INVESTMENT	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN INVESTMENT 4 INDUSTRIAL TANZ	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN METAL INDUSTRIES	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN STEEL INDUSTRIES	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN METALLURGICAL INDUSTRIES	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLYTHENE INDUSTRIES	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN PRECISE CONCRETE INDUSTRIES	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN REFRIGERATION & AIR CONDITIONING	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN CHEMICALS FOR POLYEN & POLYMERS	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN ALUMINUM CO. FOR ALUM. & FOOD PROD.	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
JORDAN PETROLEUM INDUSTRIES	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
GRAND TOTAL	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
NO. OF TRADES MADE IN PARALLEL MARKET	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00
TRADED VALUE IN THE PARALLEL MARKET	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00	1,120.00

Financial Markets Jordan Times
in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date 10/5/94	Tokyo Close 11/5/94
Sterling Pound	1.4847	1.4900
Deutsche Mark	1.6725	1.6725
Swiss Franc	1.4329	1.4320
French Franc	5.7305	5.7425**
Japanese Yen	104.42	104.12
European Currency Unit	1.1520	1.1511**

*USD per NYC

**European Opening or 8:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates Dates: 11/5/1994					
Currency	1 MTHS	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS	
U.S. Dollar	4.1300	4.5600	4.9400	5.5600	
Sterling Pound	4.8800	5.0000	5.0600	5.6300	
Deutsche Mark	5.0600	4.8800	4.8100	4.8100	
Swiss Franc	3.7500	3.7500	3.7500	3.7500	
French Franc	5.5000	5.3800	5.3800	5.3800	
Japanese Yen	2.0000	2.0000	2.1300	2.3100	
European Currency Unit	5.7300	5.5300	5.5300	5.5300	

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding 1 U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent

Precious Metals Dates: 11/5/1994					
Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm*	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	378.85	7.50	Silver	5.29	0.122

*24 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Dates: 11/5/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7000	0.7020
Sterling Pound	1.0426	1.0478
Deutsche Mark	0.4181	0.4202
Swiss Franc	0.4884	0.4906
French Franc	0.1220	0.1226
Japanese Yen	0.6716	0.6750
Dutch Guilder	0.3723	0.3742
Swedish Krona	*****	*****
Italian Lira	0.0438	0.0440
Belgian Franc	*****	*****

Per 100

Other Currencies Dates: 11/5/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8400	1.8580
Lebanese Lira	0.040356	0.041785
Saudi Riyal	0.1863	0.1882
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3250	2.3600
Qatari Riyal	0.1890	0.1907
Egyptian Pound	0.1975	0.2250
Omani Riyal	1.2970	1.3200
UAE Dirham	0.1494	0.1497
Greek Drachma	0.2645	0.2985
Cypriot Pound	1.2950	1.3965

Per 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.3768/78
1.6716/26	
1.8766/76	
1.4306/16	
34.39/43	
5.7300/50	
1600.62/1	
104.24/34	
7.7525/25	
7.2530/80	
6.5430/80	
\$1.4	

Rwanda rebels move closer to Kigali

KIGALI, Rwanda (Agencies) — Rebels crept closer to taking the capital, attacking overnight and early Wednesday after pounding army defences with heavy artillery and shelling.

Rebels struck on several fronts, but much of the fighting was centred around a government stronghold beside the airport, where both sides have suffered heavy casualties in the past three days.

U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Jose Ayala Lasso flew into Kigali Wednesday morning for meetings with government and rebel leaders to end the ethnic slaughter between the majority Hutus and minority Tutsis.

An estimated 100,000 to 200,000 people — mostly civilians — have been killed in a month of fighting and massacres in Rwanda, according to the United Nations and aid groups. About 1.3 million people have fled their homes.

The rebels, mostly Tutsis, stepped up their offensive for the capital a week ago and now are attacking the Hutu-led army from several directions.

"There was some heavy early morning gunfire and shelling. It was heavy overnight," said U.N. spokesman Mocart Gueye.

Demoralised government soldiers have given ground slowly but steadily, and U.N. officials have said the city could fall in a matter of days.

However, the army has responded to rebel bombardments with withering barrages

of their own directed at rebel positions in the city centre. Rebels advanced after pounding army positions, engaging in what appeared to be street to street fighting.

Rebels also are trying to encircle and cut off army strongholds, especially the Kanombe Camp beside the airport. The fall of the camp would give the rebels control of the airport.

Rebels also are reportedly advancing on the government-held city of Ruhengeri, 70 kilometres (43 miles) northwest of the capital. There is also heavy fighting near Bugesera, 25 kilometres southeast of Kigali.

The war erupted on April 7, a day after the presidents of Rwanda and neighbouring Burundi were killed in a suspicious plane crash in Kigali. The crash prompted a new round of ethnic massacres in the decades-old Hutu-Tutsi feud.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali and U.S. Vice President Al Gore discussed the war after the inauguration Tuesday of South African President Nelson Mandela.

After meeting with Mr. Gore, Mr. Mandela endorsed an international military force to restore calm in Rwanda. He did not elaborate. The United Nations has pulled out all but a few hundred observers in Rwanda, but some are pushing for return.

Canada has invoked a special clause of the U.N. Human Rights Commission to convene an emergency session on

Rwanda to counter atrocities in the central African country.

The emergency session, which would be only the third in the commission's 48-year history, could be held as soon as May 20 if a majority of the member countries approve, said U.N. spokeswoman Therese Gastaut in Geneva.

The United Nations Tuesday proposed a new peacekeeping force for Rwanda of at least 5,500 troops to support relief operations and protect civilians in the country's devastating civil war.

A report to the Security Council said the troops should be able to defend themselves before a ceasefire took hold but not participate in military enforcement actions against feeding Rwandese armies and militia.

Meanwhile, doctors' aid organisation Médecins Sans Frontières called Wednesday for a stronger international response to the killing in Rwanda, including U.N. "security zones" to give refuge to the wounded.

"Given the unprecedented massacres which are ravaging Rwanda, the international community's abandonment of that country is unacceptable and incomprehensible," it said in a statement from its Swiss branch.

Médecins Sans Frontières, one of the few relief organisations still working in Rwanda, said the country had become a "dark patch on the map of Africa" since the United Nations last month pulled out

most of its peacekeepers. Rebel advances are driving tens of thousands of refugees from Rwanda into neighbouring Burundi where aid workers and diplomats say a tribal time-bomb is set to explode.

They said more than a month of war and massacres, mostly of minority Tutsis by the Hutu-dominated army and extremist militia in Rwanda, had stoked Burundi's already heated tribal divisions.

"Burundi is like a time-bomb waiting to explode," said a senior international aid official in the capital of Bujumbura.

"We (diplomatic and foreign officials) are trying through intervening with officials here to stop what happened in Rwanda spilling over into Burundi. But the question is whether the threat of withdrawing aid is still a pressure after Rwanda?"

"I would suppose a government or an army without any money couldn't last long but..."

Diplomats noted U.N. special envoy to Burundi Amin Abdallah warned a week ago the international community "would stop all aid to Burundi if civil war broke out or a coup took place."

They added that rivalry, pitting interim Hutu President Sylvestre Ntibantanya against the Tutsi-dominated armed forces in Burundi, was deepening. Tension was increased by more than 100,000 people who had crossed the border from Rwanda.

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Italian Prime Minister-designate Silvio Berlusconi (left) smiles as he meets the press following talks with members of his coalition (AFP photo)

Berlusconi sworn in as premier

ROME (Agencies) — Media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi was sworn in as Italy's prime minister Wednesday at the head of a coalition government that has brought the hard right to power for the first time since 1945.

Mr. Berlusconi took the oath of office vowing to uphold Italy's constitution from President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro at the Quirinal Presidential Palace.

Mr. Berlusconi, owner of a \$7 billion a year business empire, smiled as he took the oath, in which he swore to act exclusively in Italy's interests.

He was followed by members of his 25-member cabinet, which includes members of the neo-fascist National Alliance and the federalist Northern League.

Mr. Berlusconi led a conservative "Freedom Alliance" to victory in general elections six weeks ago, just three months after he entered politics.

"I'm satisfied with the entire team," said the Northern League's leader Umberto Bossi, who only a month ago denounced Mr. Berlusconi as a power-hungry autocrat.

The National Alliance yields less power than the other two election allies but presents the biggest dilemma for Mr. Berlusconi.

The European Parliament and others have warned Italy to keep fascists out of government. Some leftist parties say the National Alliance is a dangerous throwback to dictator Benito Mussolini.

But Mr. Berlusconi insists the National Alliance has broken from its fascists roots

and no longer pushes the anti-foreigner and ultra-nationalistic principles of Mussolini.

"Italy finally a European and Western democracy in which the people select the parties that represent them," said National Alliance leader Gianfranco Fini, a longtime critic of Italy's old election system that doled out parliamentary seats by percentage of votes and helped established parties retain power.

For the moment the governing trio appeared to have reached a delicate balance in Italy's first conservative government in a half-century.

The latest battle appears to have been won by the Northern League, which was given the powerful Interior Ministry seat and several other important ministries including budget and industry. The coalition partners argued for days over who should get the interior ministry, which controls some police and investigative agencies.

"I'm satisfied with the entire team," said the Northern League's leader Umberto Bossi, who only a month ago denounced Mr. Berlusconi as a power-hungry autocrat.

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The Interior Ministry post went to the Northern League's No. 2 figure, Roberto Maroni. Disputes over two should get the post dragged out for days.

The government still needs to win a confidence vote in parliament Monday.

Barrymore seeks divorce after 7 weeks

LOS ANGELES (R) — Less than two months after they were married, actress Drew Barrymore filed for divorce from her Welsh-born husband Tuesday, citing "irreconcilable differences." Barrymore, 19, who ironically starred in the 1984 movie *Irreconcilable Differences* about a child who sues her parents for divorce, said the couple owned no joint property and asked that her maiden name be restored. According to documents filed in Los Angeles Superior Court, the couple separated April 19, less than a month after their wedding. Acting on impulse, Barrymore — the granddaughter of legendary actor John Barrymore — proposed marriage to her boyfriend of six weeks, 31-year-old Jeremy Thomas, as they strolled in a back alley near Hollywood Boulevard at 2 a.m. on March 20. Three hours later, the couple traded vows at a bar Thomas owns in Hollywood in an offbeat ceremony conducted by a minister hired through a toll-free 24-hour wedding hot line. "People will make jokes. That's a shame," Thomas told People magazine, which plastered the couple on the cover of its April 11 issue proclaiming "Exclusive: Drew's wedding." Barrymore first gained fame at age seven playing the little sister in the blockbuster movie *E.T. The Extraterrestrial*. But amid the bright lights of Hollywood, she became a drug abuser at age 12 and a well-publicised graduate of drug rehabilitation at 14.

Clinton reveals a fondness for eagles

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton, whose Secret Service code name is Eagle, revealed the source of his security identification when he said in a speech that he is an avid collector of eagle replicas. "I have for some time been a collector of eagles," Mr. Clinton told a dinner crowd of fire chiefs and emergency service personnel after he was presented with a statue of an American bald eagle, symbol of the United States. Mr. Clinton, the former governor of Arkansas, added that: "In our state, we did a lot of work trying to preserve the American eagle. And by the time I left office we had the second largest number of eagles than any state in the country. They do symbolise what is best about our country and I will treasure this," he said, admiring the brown-coloured ceramic eagle. "With all the ones I have collected, I think I have none as beautiful as this."

Cowboy Bob's wild west act is dynamite

LONDON (R) — A wild west showman blew himself up when he tried to make blank bullets in his garden shed for a charity cowboy show, an English court was told. Bob Hammon, a member of a wild west group called Rooster's Rangers, turned himself into a human fireball and was doused with a garden hose by his wife, Newham, 43, spent six weeks in hospital for treatment of burns before appearing with his wife Margaret and another member of Rooster's Rangers in court in Exeter, south-west England, charged with explosives offences. All three pleaded guilty but magistrates gave them conditional discharges after hearing that they had raised thousands of pounds for charity. After the case, Rooster's Rangers announced they were hanging up their guns for good.

Husband of 4 sisters crows about marital bliss

PORTOVIEJO, Ecuador (AFP) — Ramon Chavez confessed publicly that he is happily married to four sisters who are all pleased with arrangement and the proud father of 23 children. Chavez, 35, was interviewed by Telemazuras television with his four wives — two of them pregnant — and his children ranging in age from one to 15 grouped closely around him. "I make them all happy and fortunately none of them lack for anything," said Chavez, smiling broadly, and his wives sometimes must share the same bed. The family of sisters and 23 children who are simultaneously cousins and siblings live together in one house near Portoviejo, capital of Manabi province some 200 kilometres (120 miles) south-west of Quito.

Poll: Most voters believe Major should quit

LONDON (R) — An opinion poll published Wednesday brought more bad news for British Prime Minister John Major, struggling to keep control of a divided party before next month's European Parliament elections.

The poll said more than half of voters and a quarter of his own Conservative Party believed Mr. Major, battered by a disastrous showing for the party in local elections last week, should resign now without waiting for the June vote.

The survey, conducted by the ICM organisation for the Guardian newspaper, said that if Mr. Major waited for the election, he faced an even more humiliating result which could cost his party more than half of its 32 seats in the parliament — the elected assembly of the European Union.

It said only 27 per cent of those questioned replied that they intended to vote for the conservatives in June, just above the centrist Liberal Democrats' 24 per cent and badly trailing the 44 per cent backing for the main Opposition Labour Party.

The Guardian said a projection of the poll, calculated after interviewing 1,483 adults randomly selected throughout the country, gave Labour 57 of the 87 seats and the Liberal Democrats their first nine seats in the parliament.

The poll said support for Labour had slipped four points since April. But the figures left Mr. Major with an uphill battle to return his party to the electoral strength that has kept it in power for an unbroken 15 years.

Mr. Major's aides have tried to portray the local electoral defeat, in which the Conservatives were pushed into third place by the Liberal Democrats, as a normal mid-term protest vote.

As the recovery strengthens, support for the Conservatives will return, they argue.

Mr. Major himself dismissed speculation about his future on Tuesday, telling parliament he intended to exercise the full five-year mandate he won in the April 1992 general election.

And he faced down anti-Europeans in his party demanding a referendum on EU integration, saying he was as cool to the idea now as he had been during last year's debates on the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty on EU integration.

But his administration remained accident-prone.

A plan to build a £2.5-billion (\$3.74-billion) rail link under central London, described by Mr. Major as visionary, came to a halt when a committee rejected it Tuesday.

A junior government minister was forced to apologise to parliament for misleading it during a debate last week.

IAEA invites N. Korea for talks on nuclear testing

SEOUL (AP) — The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Wednesday invited North Korea to Vienna to discuss details of crucial reactor fuel inspections as all signs suggested a breakthrough on the nuclear standoff might be at hand.

IAEA Director General Hans Blix invited a group of experts from North Korea to discuss details and a timetable for sampling controversial nuclear fuel rods, the agency announced in Vienna.

The Blix message was made public here following unconfirmed South Korean press reports that Washington had agreed to resume high-level talks with North Korea in return for the sampling of the fuel rods at a later date.

The talks would focus on the diplomatic recognition of Pyongyang and possible economic aid by Western countries as well as the cancellation of the U.S.-South Korean joint military exercise, Team Spirit, scheduled in November.

The IAEA also said the team could finish inspecting a radiochemical lab, from which IAEA inspectors were barred by North Koreans last March, and check surveillance equipment at various nuclear facilities.

The Blix proposal also came days before the IAEA director was scheduled to report back to the U.N. Security Council on the progress in talks to resolve the nuclear row.

In April, the Security Council issued a mild statement, framed by China, urging North Korea to negotiate with the IAEA over nuclear inspections and the presence of monitors to witness the fuel replacement.

The IAEA has been insisting on not only witnessing the fuel change but also on sampling the used fuel to determine whether the isolated, Stalinist state has diverted fissile material for weapons.

Asked about the prospect for the third round of high-level talks, the official said: "We firmly hope that (dialogue on holding the talks) has reached the final phase."

Congressman unseated in Pennsylvania primary

PHILADELPHIA (R) — Philadelphia Democratic voters unseated U.S. Representative Lucien Blackwell in an upset primary vote.

In Oklahoma, Republican Frank Lucas won a special election for the 6th U.S. congressional district vacated by Democrat Glenn English.

In the Pennsylvania primary, Democrat Lynn Yeakel failed in her attempt to recover from a high-profile 1992 Senate election defeat and capture the party's nomination for governor.

Mr. Blackwell, 62, is a long-term veteran of the city and state's Democratic Party organization.

Analytic Terry Madonna of the Millersville University Centre for Politics and Public Affairs said, "I think he (Blackwell) got steamrolled by a new kind of African-American candidate, who can rebuild bridges, who's an idea man."

In the city's heavily Democratic 2nd Congressional District, the party's nomination virtually guarantees a November victory. Mr. Blackwell trailed Mr. Fattah 42 per cent to 58 per cent with 86 per cent of the vote counted.

Mitterrand hits back in nuclear tests row

PARIS (AP) — French President Francois Mitterrand insisted Tuesday that France would not resume nuclear tests during his presidency, hitting back in a row with Prime Minister Edouard Balladur over the issue.

In a television interview on the 13th anniversary of his election, Mr. Mitterrand, a Socialist, charged that as French head of state he had pre-emptive over diplomatic and foreign policy and could refuse to allow nuclear testing to resume.

The conservative Premier Balladur earlier Tuesday said that "France had never ruled out nuclear tests if they were necessary to its security."

The United States, Britain, Russia and France agreed in 1992 to a moratorium on nuclear tests.

The United States decided in March to extend its moratorium on testing until September 1995. China is the only member of the U.N. Security Council not have agreed to a moratorium on testing.

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CANBERRA**(AFP)**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cabinet reviews Yemen evacuation

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali on Wednesday chaired the weekly Foreign Ministry meeting and was briefed on efforts exerted by the Jordanian embassy in Sanaa to evacuate Jordanians from strife-torn Yemen. Dr. Majali issued directives concerning the work of the ministry. He said he supports views calling for increasing daily working hours of government departments and making a two-day weekend. Ministry Secretary General Nayef Al Hadid briefed the prime minister on the ministry's plans to purchase buildings to house Jordanian embassies abroad. The premier stressed the need for the ministry to do that in accordance to a well-prepared plan.

Christopher to Middle East at weekend

WASHINGTON (R) — Secretary of State Warren Christopher will return to the Middle East this weekend to try to spur Israeli-Syrian peace talks, officials and diplomats said Tuesday. They said Mr. Christopher was likely to travel to Damascus Sunday from Geneva, where he is scheduled to participate Friday in a foreign ministers conference on Bosnia. He will go to Israel, probably Monday evening, and return to Washington Tuesday. U.S. officials did not rule out one other stop in the region. Both U.S. officials and Middle East diplomats played down expectations for the trip. Mr. Christopher, returning from an extensive shuttle in the region only last week, said he had moved Israeli-Syrian peace talks to a new substantive level but he gave no details of the substance of the discussions.

Iran claims Britain bugs London embassy

NICOSIA (AP) — Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani on Wednesday claimed Britain had planted bugs inside Iran's embassy in London, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported. There was no immediate British response to the allegation. Mr. Rafsanjani claimed embassy staff found microphones in the building, which was repaired in December, more than 13 years after it was damaged in a raid by British commandos and police that broke a siege by Iranian militants. The two countries broke relations in 1989 after Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini ordered the killing of British author Salman Rushdie, saying his novel "The Satanic Verses" blasphemed Islam. Ties were restored in September 1990 but the two nations have not exchanged ambassadors. Recently, relations have deteriorated following British allegations of Iranian contacts with the Irish Republican Army.

Aristide opponent sworn in as president

PONT-AU-PRINCE (AFP) — Supreme Court President Emile Jonassaint was sworn in Wednesday as provisional president in a ceremony at the National Assembly. Mr. Jonassaint, 81, was inaugurated in a political move that defies international attempts to reinstate ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. General Raoul Cedras, who lead the 1991 coup that ousted Mr. Aristide, attended the ceremony, along with Senator Bernard Samson, leader of the anti-Aristide bloc in the Senate. The U.S. State Department Tuesday condemned the inauguration as an "illegal act by an illegitimate president of an illegitimate senate."

Valley comes under Israeli fire

TYRE (AFP) — The Israeli army rained flares and shells on a valley in South Lebanon Wednesday after one of its helicopters dodged a missile attack, security sources said. The helicopter was over-flying Kfarfura village, a stronghold of Hezbollah guerrillas on the outskirts of Israel's self-proclaimed "security zone" in South Lebanon when a SAM-7 missile was fired on it, they added. The crew replied by firing two rockets at guerrilla bases, but caused no casualties. The Israeli army then launched a two-hour raid on the Wadi Al Hojar valley, used by the guerrillas to infiltrate the zone, attacking it with flares and more than 40 shells, sources said.

PFLP claims attack on Israeli bus

DAMASCUS (AFP) — The Damascus-based Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) Wednesday said it carried out an attack on an Israeli bus in the occupied West Bank in which three people were wounded. The group, which is opposed to the peace process, said its fighters Tuesday opened fire at a bus carrying Jewish settlers between Ramallah and Nablus. An Israeli military official said three people were wounded in the attack by three gunmen who later fled the scene.

China allows key dissident to leave

NEW YORK (AP) — China will allow prominent dissident Yu Haocheng to leave the country this month to study and lecture at Columbia University in New York, the New York Times said Wednesday, quoting Western diplomats. Mr. Yu, 66, a one-time communist propaganda chief who became a vocal champion of democracy in China, this week received a Chinese passport allowing him to apply for a visa to enter the United States, the Times said, citing unnamed diplomats. Mr. Yu's previous petitions to go abroad were returned by Chinese authorities. Mr. Yu is the former chief editor of the Masses Publishing House, an organ of China's Public Security Bureau. Mr. Yu was not available for comment, but reportedly has purchased an airline ticket to leave China on May 28, the Times said.

4 killed in fire at Beirut gas station

BEIRUT (AP) — A family of three was among four people killed when fuel caught fire and set cars alight near a Beirut filling station Wednesday, police said. They said the fire started as a fuel tanker was emptying gasoline at the filling station in Beirut's seaside Jdeid neighbourhood at midday. Some fuel leaked from the tanker's hose as fuel was being pumped into underground tanks at the Coral station, police at the scene said. A lit cigarette or a vehicle's hot muffler may have ignited the gasoline, which flowed into the street leading to the main coastal highway to southern Lebanon, according to police. Among the victims was a woman and her two children who were killed inside their burning car, police said. Witnesses said the father staggered out of the burning Chevrolet Sedan in flames as workers struggled to put out the blaze with fire extinguishers. The victim was in serious condition in hospital.

Iranian deputies urge ban on satellites

TEHRAN (AFP) — A group of Iranian deputies called Wednesday for a ban on satellite programmes in the Islamic republic amid fears that Western culture was invading the country. The deputies, representing the Islamic conservatives in Iran, proposed to the parliament that satellite dishes be removed from rooftops in Tehran and other major cities. According to parliamentary sources, the assembly will soon take up the issue, which has posed a new challenge to the religious and political establishment. Iranian authorities are divided over the issue of the ban.

Palestinian groups hand to PLO returnee list

TUNIS (R) — Two Palestinian groups have handed to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) a list of their members who want to return to the self-rule territories in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. PLO sources said on Wednesday, they said lists were handed to PLO officials in Tunis by Abu Nidal Mseimi from the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and Sajid Salameh from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Both groups oppose the PLO's peace deal with Israel. The lists include dozens of names, the sources said.

House to study laws with Senate changes

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament on Wednesday referred to its Law Committee an amended draft law on municipalities for 1994. The amended draft was referred to the House by the Upper House (Senate), which introduced the amendments.

Meeting in the presence of the Cabinet, the House also referred to the Law Committee a draft law on standards and specifications for 1993. The draft was referred to the House also by the Senate to which it introduced amendments.

Later the House endorsed amendments to articles 28, 72 and 80 of a 1994 law on public security.

The amendments were introduced in response to a desire by His Majesty King Hussein and are aimed at improving the living conditions of all personnel of the Jordanian Armed Forces and the public security. The amendments largely benefit the pensioners, who, according to the law, would receive a lump sum of six-month salary as bonus upon the termination of their services.

The House endorsed an amended law for the Jordanian Armed Forces.

The House endorsed an amended law to the civil courts which was also referred back to it by the Senate and approved a French-Jordanian financial protocol for 1994.



KING MEETS PATRIARCH: His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday received at the Royal Court Greek Catholic Patriarch Maximus Hakim of Antioch and All Orient, who offered his condolences to the King on the passing of the late Queen Zein, the Queen Mother. Present at the audience was Greek Catholic Bishop of

Jordan George Al Murr. Following the audience expressed appreciation of King Hussein's role in safeguarding the Holy Places in Jerusalem. The patriarch earlier met Dr. Mohammad Bakht, president of the Al al-Bait University and learnt about the new university's programmes and objectives (Petra photo)

Salt to get state university

AMMAN (J.T.) — The educational committee of the Lower House of Parliament has completed a legislation to set up a new university called the "Hashemite University" in Salt which is expected to open its doors at the start of academic year 1994-95. Deputy Prime Minister and Higher Education Minister Saeed Al Tal said Wednesday.

Dr. Tal told reporters that the new university was necessary to help promote vocational and technical training and applied sciences.

"The new state university would be considered as a

turning point in endeavours by promoting applied science education in Jordan and its services would be open to all people and would cater to the needs of the local labour markets," the minister said.

The Hashemite University will serve as an umbrella for various state-run community colleges serving outside the framework of universities and will aim at promoting these colleges academically and technically and upgrade their staff in accordance with the requirements of the needs of the country, he said.

Jordan is in need of technicians and instructors in applied sciences who can help develop various labour sectors, Dr. Tal said.

Private community colleges would remain financially and administratively independent, but can be linked to and follow the system to be set by the Hashemite University, he said.

The university's curricula would be flexible and catering to the new developments of the labour market and would include training courses for upgrading vocational and technical training, he added.

The university will be governed by a board of trustees.

Israel, PLO reach accord on police

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The nearly 800 Palestinian policemen camped near the King Hussein Bridge will begin their entry to the occupied West Bank town of Jericho on Thursday, four days after the first units arrived there, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials said Wednesday.

They said negotiations between PLO and Israeli officials in the occupied territories as well as contacts between the Israeli government and the PLO leadership in Tunis had led to an understanding that the deployment could begin Thursday.

One of the key preconditions, according to reports from occupied Jerusalem and Tunis, is that PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat announce his autonomy cabinet which will run the occupied Gaza Strip and Jericho in the initial phase of the Sept. 13 Israel-PLO agreement signed in Washington.

As the first concrete step towards the deployment, several senior officials from the police force, drawn from units of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) based in Jordan and Iraq, entered Jericho on Wednesday to inspect areas designated for the police force to take up positions, the PLO officials said. They returned to the East Bank later in the day. "We expect the deployment

to begin in earnest on Friday," said a PLO official. "An advance unit of a few officers and men will enter on Thursday, but the actual entry will formally begin 24 hours later."

Brigadier Haj Ismail Jaber, commander-designate of Jericho, said "a platoon of my forces will be allowed into Jericho at an early hour Thursday morning." A platoon consisted of 50 men.

A second batch of approximately 300 men will be allowed into Jericho Thursday afternoon to be followed by nearly 400 men on Friday," Brig. Jaber told the Associated Press.

Brig. Ismail blamed the four-day delay in the entry into Jericho on technical problems

— primarily that some of the men did not possess travel documents.

"The main problem was because some of the policemen do not have any travel documents, such as passports or identification cards," he said.

He refused to disclose their number or how the problem was solved.

But a scrutiny source, quoted by the AP, estimated the number at 100 and said the Kingdom had agreed to provide them with Jordanian passports.

Highly-placed PLO sources described the delay as a tactic by the Israelis. "They want to tell us that nothing has changed by the peace agreement and they are still in control," said one source.

"The fact of the matter was that there were indeed short-

comings in the preparations," said another PLO source. "But these should have been taken care of in a matter of 24 hours. There was no reason for the Israelis to delay the process so long."

Another report, quoting an Israeli general, said Israel would not allow the police force across the bridge before Mr. Arafat announced his autonomy cabinet.

A token 150-strong police force entered the Gaza Strip on Tuesday across the Rafah border point between Egypt and Israel.

The police force awaiting Israeli clearance at the King Hussein Bridge is made up of 270 officers from the Bader Brigade of the PLA stationed in Jordan and 500 from the Al Aqsa Brigade who arrived from Baghdad on Sunday and joined the Bader unit at the bridge on Monday.

Their arms, mostly Kalashnikovs and sidearms, have already been sent across the bridge for Israeli inspections and registration before being handed back to the police force upon its entry to Jericho.

The men are housed at the pilgrimage station used by Palestinian and Israeli Arabs passing through Jordan to perform the Hajj.

Over the past three days, many of the soldiers-turned-policemen had family visitors, many of whom they have not seen for years since they were stationed in Iraq.

Bosnia government on offensive on several fronts

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Bosnia's mainly Muslim government army has stepped up attacks on several fronts, including the strategic Serb-controlled town of Breko where it was blamed Wednesday for a mortar attack that killed a pregnant woman and two children.

The shelling of downtown Breko came Tuesday, shortly after UN officials said government troops had deployed mortars and anti-aircraft guns near Sarajevo in violation of a U.N.-imposed heavy arms exclusion zone around the capital.

Fighting between the army and Bosnian Serb troops was also reported Wednesday in the northern town of Tuzla where U.N. officials said four mortar rounds landed in the Muslim part of the city.

Commander David Holloway, a spokesman for the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR), said fighting was also reported about 10 kilometres northeast of Tuzla where U.N. military observers counted 30 detonations. He said it was unclear if the fighting caused any casualties.

In Breko, meanwhile, though the UNPROFOR did

not say who was responsible for the shelling, its spokesman in Zagreb said there were "very strong indications" that it came from government positions.

UNPROFOR

said Eric Chaperon, a pregnant woman and two children were killed and 13 others wounded" when 10 mortar shells hit the centre of Breko on Tuesday shortly after 7:30 p.m. (1730 GMT).

A Zagreb UN spokesman said UN military observers in the north-eastern town saw nine impact points where shells struck in Breko's downtown area.

The U.N. observers were sent to the town amid fears that Breko was becoming a new flashpoint in the two-year-old Bosnian war.

On Wednesday morning,

three shells slammed into the Muslim-held city of Tuzla, 50 kilometres to the south. A reporter said two artillery shells and a mortar bomb hit the centre of the city designated a U.N.-protected "safe area." No casualties were immediately reported.

The two attacks could trigger a new crisis in the 25-month-old war that has torn

the former Yugoslav republic. Rebel Serbs who enclose Tuzla on two sides have been warned by the United Nations not to bombard the city and five other Muslim enclaves or face bombings by western jets.

Indications that a major battle could take place for the strategic Breko corridor linking Serb-held lands in Bosnia and Croatia are worrying the U.N., which deployed 32 military observers (UNMOS) in the area this weekend.

Haim Ramon, 44, quit as health minister just two months ago after Mr. Ramon and the cabinet withdrew their support for his far-reaching health care reform bill.

He was back with a vengeance on Wednesday, the winner of elections for the leader of the Histadrut trade federation, Israel's largest labour union and a symbol of big, bungling bureaucracy.

"Ramon will be able to call the shots. He has made himself the left's most shining new political star and a likely future candidate for prime minister," political reporter Sarah Hong wrote in the Jerusalem Post.

"The biggest loser is Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, whose power base the Histadrut machine has been thus far," she said.

Mr. Ramon, a strong supporter of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accord, joined with Mr. Ramon's main government coalition partner, the

Would-be Rabin heir wins high-profile job

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — A young Israeli political maverick, kicked out of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's Labour Party, has grabbed hold of its traditional power base and positioned himself for a future leadership challenge.

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Aziz renews lobbying at U.N.

UNITED NATIONS (R) —

Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz was beginning a 10-day visit to New York Wednesday in his ongoing campaign to convince Security Council members to lift the oil embargo against Baghdad. Mr. Aziz was to meet individual council ambassadors and other envoys in private sessions before beginning talks Friday with Rolf Ekens, head of the U.N. special commission in charge of dismantling Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

He came to New York from Vienna where he has spent days negotiating with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director Hans Blix on the nuclear segment of a long-term monitoring programme.

The monitoring programme, to ensure Iraq does not reacquire proscribed weapons, is the last major phase before Mr. Ekens and Mr. Blix can recommend the Security Council consider lifting the oil embargo, which is tied to compliance on weapons.

Iraq was put under stringent sanctions a few days after its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. A 1991 Gulf war ceasefire resolution ties exports from Iraq, such as oil, to weapons demands and the import of goods to a host of other requirements.

Mr. Ekens says he wants to put so-called baseline structures in place for chemical, biological and ballistic weapons after which he plans to test the various programmes for at least six months. Mr. Aziz and other Iraqi officials have been attempting to speed up this trial period.

The Security Council conducts its regular 60-day review on May 17, while Mr. Aziz is still in New York. But members do not expect any action and will not even issue a statement after a dispute last month on what the statement should say.

In July, however, when Mr. Ekens is expected to finish the first phase of the monitoring programme, discussions within the council are